SPORTS
White Sox a win away from 1st World Series title in 88 years

BUSINESS/B1
$3B in OFW remittances coursed thru informal channels, not banks

ACROSS/A15
P90-M bond scam discovered in Clark eco-zone

NEWS/A2
Noli: I'm not an option; I'm the successor

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Bro, Mike's son-in-law named IBC-13 president

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE INNER CIRCLE of El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde is the object of government largesse.

Mark Allan Jay Ventura, the husband of Velarde's only daughter, has been appointed president and chief executive officer of the ar...

Palace aide mocks 'people's court,' tears notice to pieces

By Jill Cabacungan Jr. and Fe Zamora

Thursday, October 27, 2005 | 32 pages | vol. 20 | no. 321
www.inq7.net

'Festival of killings' in CL condemned

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN? Ex-Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante gives the Senate Blue Ribbon the slip for the third time.

2 ex-agri execs evade Senate probe

By Nikko Dizon and TJ Burgonio

TWO FORMER EXECUTIVES OF the Department of Agriculture yesterday left the country hours before a scheduled Senate hearing on the alleged mismanagement of a multimillion-peso fertilizer fund deal (the 2004 scandal for which they have been summoned) ...

Former Agriculture Secretary Luis "Cito" Lorenzo Jr. left for Hong Kong, while former Agri. undersec. Undersecretary for Finance Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante left for Los Angeles, according to sources at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

Lorenzo and Bolante were invited to the senate hearing to shed light on allegations that the ...

GMA asks opposition: Join gov't of nat'l unity

By Christine O. Avendaño

CEBU CITY—IN A MOVE described by a Palace official as unprecedented, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called on the opposition to join her in establishing a government of national unity and put an end to the current political crisis.

She stressed that she was not proposing "power sharing" but "sharing public leadership and responsibility for the common good."

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said the Arroyo's proposal entailed appointing "responsible" opposition members to the Cabinet. He said he had mentioned Home Minority Leader Prospero Pichay to the President and that the lawmaker had agreed to the proposal and join the government "in the proper time."

"I hope this is the proper time," Defensor said.

Pichay confirmed that he had been approached by the President. He refused to say what he was making the offer in order to "strengthen the republic."

"The proposal of government of national unity is not meant to please the opposition but to consolidate the nation behind our ...

THE MARCH FOR JUSTICE. Ka Ric Ramos, president of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac labor union at Hacienda Luisita, ends its Bunangan Hupalarawan, Tarlac City, where the remains of the slain labor leader lie.

Four more shot dead in 48 hours in C. Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
Lolit A. del Puerto
and Philip C. Tubeza

GUNMEN SHOT DEAD two militant peasant leaders and two other men over a 48-hour period in Tarlac and Pampanga in what an activist described as a continuing "festival of killings" in the region.

Nicanor Ramos, 47, president of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (Cutla), was shot and killed on Sunday while shooting with friends in his backyard in Barangay Hupalarawan, five hours after the union received at least P8 million from the Hacienda Luisita Inc. as severance for land swaps.

The 5,000-member hacienda in Tarlac is owned by the family of former President Corazon Aquino.

Cutla members walked off their jobs on May 6 last year, a...

DOH: Bird flu not 'if' but 'when'; 21 hospitals readied

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH has upgraded 21 hospitals in preparation for an imminent bird flu outbreak, saying this is no longer equivalent of "if but when it will come."

Patients will be referred primarily to the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) in Muntinlupa, San Lazaro Hospital in Manila, Lung Center of the Philippines in Quezon City, Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center in Cebu City, and the Davao Medical Center in Davao City.

The hospitals, along with 16 regional sentinel centers, are equipped with isolation rooms, sterile drugs and preventive gears.

The RITM has its own negative pressure rooms which were used to contain the case of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) three years ago.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III yesterday said a news briefing that these hospitals had the capability to manage avian influenza cases.

The government has stepped up an awareness campaign on bird flu as the virus continues to spread from Asia to Europe. As of yesterday it has killed at least 62 people, mostly in Vietnam and Thailand.

Asked how near bird flu was to the Philippines, Duque replied: "It's very near. It is only a matter of time. It is not a question of 'if' but 'when.'"

Duque noted that the virus wreaked the biggest havoc in neighboring countries like Vietnam, Indonesia and Cambodia. Worse, he said, the period be...

OFW cash boosts peso to $4.96

By Doris C. Dumlao
Business

STRONG REMITTANCE flows from overseas Filipino workers and an improving economy yesterday boosted the peso to a new four-month high against the US dollar despite the country's persistent political crisis.

The peso breached the psychological $4.81 barrier, hitting an intra-day high of $4.86 before closing $1,008 at the Philippine Dealing System. It was the peso's strongest finish since June 9.

The local currency gained another 20.5 centavos from Tuesday's closing rate of $5.26 against the greenback. Value traded reached $550 million.

"The sustained increase in remittances in the fourth quarter will support the value of the peso," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura told the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines ...

YASKTAW! HONORED. Vice President Noli de Castro (rear) salutes the flag escorted by Col. Pedro Fernando (previous left) and Col. Nestor Sadiarte during commemorative rites of the 61st anniversary of the Leyte Gulf Landing at the MacArthur Landing Memorial National Park in Palo, Leyte. In his speech, De Castro urged Filipinos and Americans to join forces once again to combat poverty and terrorism in our times.

Senate releases Gonzales but he's not off the hook

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE IS LETTING GO OF National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales for now, but he won't entirely off the hook.

After over a month of locking horns with Malacañang, the Senate last night ordered the release of the ailing Gonzales to allow him to seek medical treatment, possibly abroad.

Senate President Franklin Drilon issued the order to the sergeant-at-arms after the senators unanimously approved the blue ribbon committee's interim report, which declared Gonzales' release from its custody on humanitarian grounds.

However, the committee headed by Sen. Alfredo Lim also ...

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

Second **FRONTPAGE**

Top terror suspect falls

By Luige A. del Puerto

GOVERNMENT SECURITY forces have captured the leader of an extremist group which had allegedly been planning a wave of bombings in Metro Manila, in a raid in Zamboanga City, the military announced yesterday.

Police and military intelligence officials described the arrest of Filimon del Rosario Santos, alias Ahmad Santos or Abu Lukay, along with at least five other people, as a "big blow" to the regional terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah and its local affiliate, the Abu Sayyaf group.

The authorities have said that the JI and ASG had been using Santos' band of Islamic converts, who mostly come from Luzon and apply themselves as the Rajah Sulaiman Movement, or RSM, to plant and, when possible, carry out bombings in the capital.

While the Abu Sayyaf had claimed responsibility for the sinking of an international ship that killed more than 100 people last year, some intelligence reports say the RSM was also involved in the attack.

SOUTHERN COMMAND chief Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit (center) flanks Marines Col. Rosario Santos, alias Ahmad Santos or Abu Lukay, during presentation to media after his arrest.

Big blow

"It's a big blow for any organization to lose its leader," Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga told the reporters at Camp Aguinaldo. "So it is a big accomplishment of the Armed Forces and we hope there will be following-up operations that will bring the entire group's totality."

A security intelligence officer who asked not to be identified said the impetus that the authorities have got to locate the group's hideout in Metro Manila and they were quite concerned because the group may repeat attacks as in the bombings of trains and MRT kilometric of bomb materials.

In March, the police and military seized 500 kilos of explosives in an apartment in Quezon City, and declared that they had discovered a major terrorist attempt in Metro Manila. They had been tracking down Santos since then.

Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, head of the Region 9 Police, said an elite team of policewomen and military agents arrested the house of a Muhib Hamsalie on San Jose Road, Zamboanga City at 11:45 p.m. Tuesday.

Arrested with an arrest warrant, the raiding team nabbed Santos and five others who were identified as Sarangani Abdul Hilm, Santos' wife, his son Ahman Islam Santos, Muhk Mamsalie, Jaimin Pangani and Yusop Amirul. The group, apparently asleep at the time, put up no resistance, police said.

They yielded a map of Metro Manila, 40 rounds of an assault rifle gun, six blasting caps, a baby armalite, three M16-rifle magazines, ammunition and documents, electrical tools, computers and documents, Noble said.

Santos, who was to be flown to Manila yesterday afternoon, walked with a limp and appeared to be in a daze when Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit presented him to reporters in Zamboanga City. He was not allowed to talk to reporters, however.

Up to something

"He's still undergoing normal interrogation. We believed the group was up to something big during the long holidays," Adan said, referring to next week's holidays to mark the Roman Catholic All Saints Day and the end of Ramadan for Muslims.

Adan said another person in the hideout, apparently a Indo-based Indonesian identified as PO3 Sani Hamdali, managed to escape.

Supt. Rony Luciano, Zamboanga City police director, said investigators wanted to know if Santos, who have kidnapping charges before the Puig Trial Court, had formed terrorist cells in Zamboanga or nearby provinces and cities.

Adan said intelligence reports indicate Santos' group has cells in Northern Luzon, Central Luzon, Metro Manila, the Bicol Region and Southern Tagalog.

"We are conducting more interrogations [on the suspects] to determine the extent of their organizing and recruitment here," he said.

Santos was born in Quezon City in 1971, and was raised in Caloocan City and Ayala, Pangasinan, according to a dossier on him obtained by the Inquirer.

He studied computer programming and worked in Saudi Arabia in 1996. He returned to the Philippines, got established a madrasah or Islamic school in Ayala town.

Apart from being the acknowledged leader of the RSM, Santos is described in the dossier as a member of two organizations called Al Ittihadiah Islamiah and Dhalia Pemadi is an Inconpun-Soul.

In May 2003, the police reached down on the RSM and arrested several of its members, who were suspected of undergoing terrorist training in a self-proclaimed base in Pangasinan. Police had rank of them, however, after they were set free on bail.

Senior Insp. Ryanne "Lloyd" Santos, was arrested by military agents in connection with the 600-kilo of bomb materials uncovered early this year. He was posted bail and has since disappeared.

Earlier this year, the police disclosed that Abu Solaiman had ranked Santos, together with ASG leaders especially Amilhamja Ajijul, Abu Turik, Abu Sulaf, Abu Rashman and Abu Omar, was a leader of Pangasinan. Al-qaeda leader in South Asia closely to the town City in relation to the death of ASG leaders during a police assault in Tagaig City in March. *With reports from Donna Pazcalvopin, John E. Alvarez, PDI Pangasinan Bureau and the Agence Presse*

Noli: I'm not an option

By Cynthia D. Rubrico

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO YESTERDAY shrugged off calls for his resignation, saying he was not interested in succeeding President Macapagal-Arroyo in case she resigns.

In a talk with the business, De Castro stressed that a vacancy in the presidency would not necessarily mean a vacancy in the vice presidency.

"I believe it's wrong for them to consider me merely an option or an alternative because I am the only constitutional successor to the President if she resigns," he said.

But since President Arroyo denies she is next in line for resigning calls for the time top officials of the land to quit.

De Castro said only the people who voted for him could deny him the right to succeed the president, either by removing him or voting about her term, but that this can be expressed in a plebiscite.

He said that if the President resigns it does not follow that he should also resign. "She may delay and running [even as fledgling Kampi] to maximize her party-list proposal [vying super-majority elections on June. Republic under Cory Aquino] to [will sit as President] and not me," he said.

"Under the Constitution, I cannot understand how snap elections could cover the person. They should be [not covered by Constitution]," De Castro said.

As the developed, election lawyer Romulo Macalintal yesterday denied banner ties Loren Legarda to withdraw her election protest against Jo Ejercito.

He said Legarda should also make the supreme sacrifice to withdraw her protest since she was claiming to be the rightful winner in the 2004 vice presidential elections.

"Let Legarda withdraw! Macalintal's argument is unacceptable.

"That's not the issue. I am not the issue here. The issue here is the free and unprejudiced votes [of] the electorate [they chosen]," Legarda said.

"Why should I withdraw my protest when I was the one elected. I just want to right the wrong committed against me and the people who casted his vote. Justice to the rightful winner," she added. *With a report from Ed Rep*

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Palace: No concession to 13 Magdalo officers

By Doris Z. Pazzibugan

ARMED FORCES CHIEF GEN. GENEROSO Senga yesterday said the 13 leaders of the failed coup of July 2003 who have since applied for President Macapagal-Arroyo will not get any concessions for their trouble.

The 13 junior officers, who are among the 46 leaders of the military takeover of the Oakwood Premiere hotel at the Ayala Center on July 27, 2003, sent "A Personal Letter to our Commander-in-Chief Sept. 21.

In it, they said they had accepted "that we made a mistake with our actions at Oakwood" and reaffirmed their allegiance to the AFP. "We unpaid action where we really belong."

The Sept. 21 manifesto was made public late Tuesday when five of the signatory officers, Army Captains Gerardo Gambala and Milo Rhein Gumtop, were interviewed by ABC television.

Senga said he knew about the TV appearance, the first for anyone from the group of mutinous officers, who called themselves the Magdalo group during the day-long mutiny—also have been barred from any media contact since their incarceration six years ago.

"No concessions were created. Their statements, their change of heart were done on their own," said Senga, who met with the group's lawyer last week to discuss their letter to the President.

"Of course we are hoping that the others would also do the same. But people have different views about some things. So we respect it," he added.

He said he was not sure how the members would affect the officers' court cases, but he expressed the assurance to consider the "remorse" displayed by the 13 officers.

"I think [their letter] would have an effect. Because we are also dealing with people who express remorse with compassion. That's normal," Senga said.

The 96 junior officers, including the 27 core leaders, are being tried before a military court for mutiny, conduct unbecoming an officer and grave disorder.

The core leaders are also being tried on coup d'etat charges by a civilian court.

In their letter, the 13 officers said they "no longer [wanted] to support any form of military action against the government and or such leader as I feared [that we are not part of any destabilization plots."

The other signatories were Captains Alfonso Baloyo, Leuterio Lonie Somera, First Lieutenants Jeffrey Cangcuna, Jose Enrico Dingle, Jay Bobi, Warren Lee Dagupion, Cleo Gonggan, Antonio Parlade Jr., Rolando Sonsona, Jr., Ronald Dayan Yaun, Regino Gerona and Mary Jason Tayabas, who are all Army officers.

Gambala, Mastermind and four of the core leaders, Master Captains Nestor Pasadon and Gary Alejano and Navy Lieutenants Antonio Gonzales and Patricio Pe and Army Lieut. personally apologized to the President last Sept. 24, 2004.

A plea bargain extended to 184 enlisted men who joined the failed coup did not result in the officers.

Contempt raps vs LandBank withdrawn

By Nelson F. Flores

THE PROSECUTOR YESTERDAY WITHdrew the contempt charges they filed against seven officials of the Land Bank of the Philippines after the bank's management agreed to place under garnishment the dollar accounts belonging to the family of former Armed Forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos F. Garcia.

Robert L. Kallos, the deputy special prosecutor, said the government would drop its petition for contempt after LBP officials submitted a written manifestation to the Sandiganbayan's 5th Division that the Garcia dollar accounts were effectively frozen as of March 31, 2005.

On Nov. 3, 2004, the Sandiganbayan issued a garnishment order against all known properties of the Garcia family.

However, Rosemarie Ocampo, the LBP vice president, said the order could not be enforced as the Garcia family's dollar accounts were considered "absolutely confidential" and exempt from government under RA 6426, or the Foreign Currency Deposit Act.

Government lawyers immediately filed a petition for contempt to force the bank's officials to comply with the court order.

The government has filed plunder and forfeiture cases against Garcia who is accused of amassing an ill-gotten wealth worth P303 million in assets and properties while serving as Armed Forces comptroller. He is alleged to have received millions of pesos in payoffs from military contractors.

GMA wants Cebu to host Asean + 3 summit next year

By Christine O. Avendaño

CEBU CITY – MARVELLOUS! At the way Cebu has become a magnetic tourists, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the province could host next year the holding of the Asean + 3 Summit.

It will be the turn of the Philippines to host some year the summit that comprised of members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and its three partners countries made up of Japan, China and South Korea.

"It's going to be a great summit, not only for Asean but also for us, because Cebu is what we want to showcase of what the Philippines can be," President Arroyo said in a speech at the opening of the Cebu Hilton resort and spa here.

The President noted the rise of new hotels in the province and urged local officials to build more tourism facilities.

She also said that Cebu has become a magnet for tourists, citing tourist arrivals.

Last year, she said half of 2.4 million tourists who visited the country were in Cebu.

But for this year, the President said tourism officials expect that out of the 2.7 million tourists coming in, 75 percent of them will head to Cebu.

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Pichay on speakership: It ain't over ...

By Michael Lim Ubac

HE IS NOT READY TO THROW in the towel, even after the meeting of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Kabalikat ng Mahirang Pilipino with the ruling Lakas-CMD appears no later revealed his bid for the House speakership.

"How can you say it's over when it has yet to begin? I haven't even announced that I will [run]," said Antipas-Isni that Was Prospero Pichay.

Pichay is now eyeing the support of the Liberal Party to boost his chances of ousting Speaker Jose de Venecia.

In a phone interview, Pichay said the LP which was split in half by the failed impeachment bid last month, had decided to saddle the issue of the rivalry for the House speakership as "non-party."

The LP held a party caucus on Tuesday at the residence this Manuel Roxas. It was attended by 20 of the 34 LP House members.

PICHAY: It has not even started and has Aquino-Pimentel and Sen. Rodolfo Plaza, the Kampi president, quietly signed an agreement last week for Kampi to join the ruling party.

President Pimentel, 20 Kampi senators signed the one-page memorandum of understanding, said strengthen the ruling party so as to pursue in the formation of a parliamentary system which are to personally decide."

It said that should the merger not be feasible for any reason, Kampi would "re-affiliate" with the Lakas-CMD "to help ensure the expanded role of the nationalist ruling party in the adoption sooner of a unicameral parliamentary government."

Kampi earlier threatened to block De Venecia's Charter change committee, after the Speaker suggested shifting chief the term of the President to 2007 to pave the way for the transition to a parliamentary system.

Concessions to Kampi

In exchange for supporting De Venecia's leadership and his Charter change initiative, Kampi members will take over some of the most powerful leadership posts in the House, including two slots in the Steering Committee on Appointments.

In a joint statement, LP representatives Benigno Aquino III and Rolando Andaya Jr. said the party members had decided to "set aside political differences and unite as one" to make them "a force to reckon with."

"As a party, [the] LP will seek an audience with [Arroyo] ... but this is going to be a solid vote," the statement said.

Tañada explained that this meant that "we would not vote individually but as a party ... whatever would promote a better program in the House."

SECURITY COUNCIL BIG LEAGUE

US Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton, right, meets with Philippine Ambassador Lauro Baja, left, Japan's Ambassador Kenzo Oshima, second left, and China's Ambassador Wang Guangya in the Security Council chamber before a meeting, Tuesday. The Philippines has been presiding over the Security Council, highlighted by President Macapagal-Arroyo's stint as presiding officers of the the Council during its summit-level events. AP

Palace asks SC to reject petition vs EO 464

By Armando N. Nocum

MALACAÑANG HAS ASKED THE Supreme Court to dismiss petitions questioning the constitutionality of Executive Order No. 464, saying there was no legal basis to question the legality of the order.

In a consolidated comment to the petition filed by various groups, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita — who was represented by Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo — sought the dismissal of the petitions on the ground that, among others, there was no actual case involving the application of EO 464 to warrant its consideration by the courts.

Ermita noted that the petitioners' allegation that the EO barring Cabinet members and military and police officials from appearing in congressional hearings would affect the doctrine of separation of powers was "based solely on 'apprehension' that the President would prohibit her concerned officials from appearing in congressional hearings."

"Having failed to allege any action on the part of the President showing that EO 464 has actually impeded Congress' power to conduct legislative inquiries and that the principle of separation of powers has been violated, the lone petitioner should be dismissed outright for this ostensible want," the solicitor general argued.

Various senators led by Senate President Franklin Drilon, party-list representatives, former President Corazon Aquino, the Alternative Law Groups were among those who went to the SC in question the EO 464.

Ermita said it is only covered officials in the Executive Department and so there was "no conflict between the executive issuances and the exercise of any legislative power."

Ermita said there was nothing in EO 464 which prevented Congress from conducting inquiries in aid of legislation.

Quake preparedness measures ordered

By Leila B. Salaverria

TO ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY, THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways yesterday directed local building officials of six high-risk cities in Metro Manila to identify structures in their respective areas that are vulnerable to earthquakes.

The move is part of the DPWH's earthquake preparedness program, under which the soundness of buildings, bridges and flyovers would be examined by a specially created Task Force on Building Inspection.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology has identified the six earthquake-prone cities in Marikina, Manila, Pasig, Pasay, Taguig and Mandaluyong.

DPWH Undersecretary Salvador Reyes, head of the task force, said critical buildings, bridges and flyovers in the six cities would be given priority in the inspection as their respective measures or repairs could be carried out as soon.

"We will prioritize the inspection of structures in these cities. Since the local building officials know their areas better than we do, we instructed them to identify the structures that should be assessed at once," he said in a phone interview.

Critical structures

Establishments like schools, hospitals, communication centers and food storage facilities are also on the list of structures that would be given importance in inspections.

Reyes presided over the first meeting of the task force yesterday. Its vice chair is the executive director of the National Building Code Development Office, while its members are Metro Manila building officials, DPWH officials, the Manila, Metro Manila Development Authority, Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers, United Architects of the Philippines, Association of Structural Engineers of the Philippines and Institute of Integrated Electrical Engineers.

Duties said that after critical structures have been identified, the task force would draft a plan on how the actual field inspections should be conducted by each of the concerned organizations.

Among those that would be inspected and assessed in a building are its foundation, steel, columns and beams, electrical wiring and its architectures.

Inspection teams

The task force has formed inspection teams composed of representatives from each of the concerned agencies and these would be the ones to check the buildings. Another composite team would assess the conditions of bridges and government offices.

DPWH National Capital Region Director Robert Lala has instructed district engineers to inspect Metro Manila's 186 bridges and 16 flyovers.

The Task Force on Building Inspection was created through a special order issued on Monday by DPWH Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.

The task force was formed "to mitigate damages to buildings/structures in the event an earthquake occurs."

The task force is supposed to conduct inspections and assess the conditions of various buildings in Metro Manila and recommend further actions to the DPWH secretary.

IKAW AT ANG SSS

Questions & Answers on Social Security

Disability Benefit

Who is the New SSS Disability Program?

What is the main objective of the new disability program?

What is method used to determine how much one receives in disability program?

Who is qualified for disability benefit under the new program?

What are some of the permanent disabilities with designated amounts of monthly pension?

What are some of the total permanent disabilities?

What are the types of disability benefits?

How much is the monthly pension?

Is the monthly pension for life?

Is the monthly pension subject to income tax?

How is the monthly pension paid?

Are only disabled members entitled to disability benefits?

Kabalikat mo sa buhay!

Survey says media reporting too negative

By Jamie Alawan
Philstar.com

A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE SOCIAL Weather Stations at the height of impeachment proceedings against President Macapagal-Arroyo found that 41 percent of 1,200 adults polled believed that media is painting bad but one-sided negatives.

Twenty-nine percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement "Often, news on television, radio and in newspapers are generally negative and are no longer helping the country," according to the results of the nationwide poll released yesterday.

Undecided replies totaled 29 percent.

Those who said they "strongly agreed" with the statement pointed to Metro Manila, Class E, the poorest areas (51 percent).

General agreement (either "strongly" or "somewhat") was also highest among Metro Manilans at 47 percent, and Classes ABC at 44 percent.

The polling was conducted from Aug. 23 to Sept. 1, during the opposition's attempts to unseat Mrs Arroyo over allegations she rigged last year's balloting. Ms Arroyo's dominant allies in the House rejected the impeachment articles on Sept. 6.

Another survey item showed that 37 percent of Filipinos thought that the opposition does not have a clear plan for the country and its only objective is to overthrow the President. The highest levels of agreement were among the 35-44-age bracket.

Some 26 percent disagreed with this statement while 35 percent were undecided.

The survey was commissioned by the ABS Education System, known for its computer courses.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EDUCATION

President Macapagal-Arroyo is welcomed as guest of honor during the "Entrepreneurship and Basic Education: Investing in Young Minds Now" forum organized by the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship, along with the Department of Education, on Tuesday at the Manila Polo Club. Welcoming the President are (from left) Josette Campos, chair and CEO of Unilab, Socorro Ramos, founder and general manager of National Bookstore and Jose Ma. Concepcion III, presidential consultant for entrepreneurship.

Church group says VAT to drive people to hunger

By Jovanie Aning

UNLESS THEY CAN SOMEHOW ARGUND for up to P900 more, families earning less than P15,000 a month will have to cut down spending even on such basic necessities as food and health care when the expanded value-added tax is implemented next month, a church-based labor research group said Wednesday.

"The EVAT's implementation will only further widen the already yawning gap between the incomes of ordinary Filipino households and the prices of basic goods and services," said Rod Quintos, executive director of the Ecumenical Institute for Labor Education and Research, or Ilier.

Quintos described the expanded VAT as the Arroyo administration's "horrible Halloween treat" and warned of widespread unrest among the resulting people due to the increase in the prices of of goods and services resulting from the higher tax impositions.

The Quezon City-based organization estimated that just to stay above water, a family earning P15,000 a month would need increases P600 and P900 in additional income each month.

Quintos noted that the prevailing P125-minimum daily wage in Metro Manila, the highest in the country, is just 66 percent of the estimated P188.1 daily cost of living for a family of six as established by the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

He said the government should improve its VAT collections rather than widen the coverage and increase the tax rate.

According to the National Tax Research Center, the government was losing on average 30 percent of the expected annual collection from the previous VAT law due to leakages. This translates to annual losses of up to P41 billion, or about P300 billion from 1998 to 2002.

SC won't annul sale of Locsin press, lot

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME COURT HAS UPHELD THE Martial Law-era sale of properties belonging to the Philippines Free Press magazine to a group of former President Ferdinand Marcos, saying there was simply no way that that venerable pillar of Philippine journalism, Teodoro Locsin Sr., could have been deterred from trying to have the sale nullified much earlier if he really had wanted to.

The ruling in The Philippines Free Press et al. vs. Hon. Ramon A. Gonzales et al. (G.R. No. 154953) was penned by Associate Justice Antonio T. Carpio and promulgated on Oct. 26.

The ruling affirmed a Court of Appeals decision that dismissed the petition filed by the magazine, now run by the late Locsin's sons Rep. Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. and Monique Locsin, to void the 1973 sale of the properties to Dona Metro, then publisher of the Manila Bulletin and a close associate of Marcos.

The Court of Appeals had also earlier ruled down the Locsin heirs, who contended that the properties had been sold under duress and that Locsin Sr. had no legal means to contest the sale during Marcos' rule.

"It strains credulity to believe that petitioner found it impossible to commence and succeed in an annulment suit during the entire stretch of the dictatorial regime," the Supreme Court said in a ruling written by Justice Canzio Garcia.

It said the magazine had failed to "convincingly prove" that Locsin Sr. was "so circumscribed that it was well-nigh impossible for him/them to successfully institute an action during the martial law years."

Feigning ignorance

"Petitioner cannot plausibly feign ignorance of the fact that shortly after his arrest in the evening of Sept. 20, 1972, Mr. Locsin Sr., together with several journalists, dared to file suits against powerful figures of the dictatorial regime and inevitably challenged the legality of the declaration of martial law," the court said.

"Judging from the actuations of Mr. Locsin Sr. during the onset of the martial law regime and immediately thereafter, any suggestion that intimidation or duress forcibly seized his hands during the dark days of martial law to seek judicial assistance must be rejected," it added.

The Philippines Free Press was highly critical of Marcos before it was shut down, along with almost all other newspapers, when the strongman declared martial law in 1972. The only papers that remained open were the Manila Times and the now defunct Philippine Daily Express, then a newly established newspaper owned by people close to Marcos. The Free Press resumed publication in 1986.

According to the petition, Marcos, through emissaries, tried to buy the weekly magazine from Locsin Sr. The journalist, however, refused to sell until Marcos, a former military aide-de-camp to Marcos, approached him in the middle of 1973.

Street had intoned that "Marcos cannot be denied" and that Locsin Sr. had "no choice but to sell," the Free Press said.

Locsin Sr. agreed to sell the magazine's 5,000-square-meter property on Roxas Boulevard in Malate, along with its building and the magazine's equipment, for a total of P5.75 million. Locsin Sr., however, refused to sell the magazine or its name.

The late publisher agreed to sell the properties after his employees demanded separation pay while the magazine's minority stockholders asked that he buy out their shares.

Founded in 1908, the Philippines Free Press was one of the country's most influential and widely read publications and brought writers to cult status in Nick Joaquin, Antonio G. Lacson, Alfredo Salanga, Wilfredo D. Nolledo, Karina Pahnan Bautista, Tita Lacambra Ayala, Napoleon Rama, among many others.

Its closure in 1972 was the second time the magazine was shut down. The Japanese occupation army shut it down in 1942.

Palace aide mocks 'people's court'

From page A1

Trade and Accountability (CCTA) as one of the media "stars" of the operations, Malacañang yesterday made a mockery of its stance on propriety in President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointments.

Assistant Environment, Assistant Secretary Jeanette Magsaysay of the Office of the Press Secretary, signed for this document served on her by Commissioner Dennis Cuspilong outside the Palace's Mendiola gate.

Then Magsaysay turned around, cut through the phalanx of soldiers and policewomen, lost the summons in the process and went for the first flying vehicle working to a government vehicle.

He added office, these three Aida aired newspapers who were on the scene even before the subpoena was even served by the police.

Magsaysay could not afford to be interviewed while wearing up the document signed by former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., who said head the CCTA Presidium.

Guingona said he just issued a statement saying: "We all know that based on our knowledge of the Constitution, this paper that I received has no legal basis and is nonetheless it will only crowd my desk, and because it is worthless, it's only proper to dismiss it away."

Cuspilong said Magsaysay (a former was "very embarrassing" and "unjustified," but added that he and the other witnesses of the "people's court" "exercised restraint."

"This is not the way to treat a very serious undertaking," the environmentally known lawyer told reporters. "The attitude shown by Ms. Magsaysay reflects the attitude of his superior."

Nathaniel Santiago, secretary general of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, said Malacañang's flip of notice of proceedings had been served on Malacañang.

He said the notice was received by the Palace's records section and was not accepted the barcode number 0509-10734.

"What Magsaysay did was infidelity to a public document. He did not respect even his own signature," Santiago said.

The three-page document bound by attorney Ma. Antonia Lo presents her allegations in her personality as "thought a lawyer, on the accusation that she used her position to beat during last year's presidential election.

It also grants her the avenue to dismiss lack of charges that she had accepted "payment" money approved contracts disadvantageous to the government, and public funds to finance her campaign, committed bribery, illegal solicitation through political siblings, and violated the people's right to peaceful assembly.

"The Citizen's Congress would be the avenue to show her name, once and for all, and put a closure to all these issues and controversy," Guingona said.

The CCTA has no a public mold by Ms Antonio starting on Nov. 8 at the University of the Philippines' Theater.

Show of force

Malacañang presented a show of force in dealing with the CCTA, which had planned to serve the action on Speaker Jose de Venecia III, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo.

Police blocked about a dozen members of the people's court in front of the Centro Escolar University (CEU) on Mendiola at about 2 p.m.

Guingona said Supt. Evangelina Candia, spokesperson of the Manila Police District, "This is not a rally. We are not armed. We will just bring this Unbecoming Secretary Documents," to which Candia replied: "Our suggestion is that you send it by official registered mail."

Guingona said only five of them would enter the gate near CEU, which has Mendiola-Ayala's Gate 7.

Balls of barbed wire, metal bars and armored vans blocked the five gate.

Members of the Presidential Security Group armed with firearms and bolo knife in dozens of the gate. A dozen of them in full battle gear, wandered the gate from a vehicle parked nearby.

After truck, a forklift and contained one also blocked the road leading to Gate 7, which opens to the Palace grounds and which was covered with galvanized iron sheets, painted green and white.

Private initiative

Senate President Franklin Drilon upheld the right of the inside sector Baldomero Falcon ex-Gatchalian to form a people's court to hear accusations against Ms Arroyo.

"This is an initiative taken by [members of] the private sector, and they are entitled to do that. I think, just like any other crusading citizens of this country, such activities are not prohibited," Drilon said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said the formation of the people's court indicated public frustration at lingering doubts over the legitimacy of the various administrations.

"More and more people are considering the last resort of the works, one of the political controversies that affect the economy, stability and peace and security," said Biazon, who, like Drilon, has called for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

"With the people's court, we seem to be going in that direction because the [electoral] impeachment [case] has not provided a credible and acceptable resolution of the questions of the leadership's legitimacy, credibility and integrity," he said.

But Biazon warned that the proponents of the people's court should ensure that it would not lead to "a total breakdown of our institutions and processes."

He also raised the "problem" of who would implement its ruling.

Propaganda

But administration Senator Richard Gordon and Aquino disarmed the CCTA as opposition propaganda that the counter did not lend.

"In effect, it is a kangaroo court as well, sacrificing," Barter said, echoing Malacañang's statement on Thursday.

He added: "I think former Vice President Guingona is a very level-headed person, but I can't imagine how this people's court will function in the long."

"I think it is just an opposition's gimmick that will not be of any help to us. It's just for propaganda purposes."

Inquirer Research Jeffrey Ansellanta, Michael Lim Ubac and Alexis Pogas

Defensor ready to face people's court

By Christine O. Avendaño

(2ND) CITY — THE SO-CALLED people's court is nothing but a "media play," but Environment Secretary Michael Defensor insisted he has nothing to hide.

"If they call me, I will [testify]," Defensor told reporters yesterday, adding that he would tell the court the supposed anomalies in the 2004 presidential election.

Defensor, President Macapagal-Arroyo's reelection campaign manager, has constantly denounced four former associates of poll fraud, saying she won the election fair and square.

But while he would face the people's court, Defensor said he was questioning the authority of its convenors in the Philippines.

"What right does this group have to call for a people's court?" he said.

Defensor also assailed the use in quotes of former Vice President Teofisto Guingona in the people's court.

"If he really felt that way, why did he accept being ambassador to China, in the first place, and why did he not resign, instead, after the Peso-Net scandal broke?" Defensor said.

GMA asks opposition: Join gov't of nat'l unity

From page A1

economic turmoil?" said Ms Arroyo.

Not power-sharing

The opposition has accused Ms Arroyo of rigging last year's election. She has denied the charge and has refused to step down in the face of massive outrage in Congress. Her rivals have vowed to press their efforts to unseat her by building protest actions.

Speaking at the joint opening of the 2005 Global Business Summit and the Philippine Business Conference, the President said she would initiate consultations on her proposal in a meeting of major political parties.

Saying that some people have already rejected her offer—and he mentioned Boying Remulla, the former governor—it is clear that she was not offering any "power-sharing."

She said power-sharing "is why people decide to the parliamentary system."

"So we must live that change in the Constitution. We do this not because it's shaking public leadership and responsibility but the common good," Ms Arroyo said.

While the President said some people had already rejected a unity government, the general tone that opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara was supportive and she thanked him for that.

El Shaddai advice

The President's proposal was reportedly meant to show that she was heeding the advice of key allies led by El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde to form a national government in order to address the political crisis.

Offering himself as a mediator, Velarde has initiated a dialogue with Ms Arroyo's rivals, including former President Joseph Estrada and Senator Angara.

Drilon, who accompanied Ms Arroyo, acknowledged that the Velarde initiative was just one of the attempts to "bring down the country's existing public leadership and responsibility for

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2005

E-mail: [illegible]@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Chx doesn't live here anymore

By Nini Valera

CHX ALCALA, THE INDIANA BOMBSHELL evicted from the "Pinoy Big Brother" house last Saturday, vowed she would wait for PB-American housemate Sam and continue their budding romance.

"I want him," Chx told Inquirer Entertainment last Monday. "I told him I would wait for him outside [the PBB house]."

The two had a tearful farewell on national television, further fueling speculation among the housemates and the nation that the pair was having an affair inside the PBB house, which started a few weeks ago.

But it was Chx's passionate kiss with Sam during a party in the PBB house that started the downtrend in her popularity among viewers. She garnered six percent of text votes—the lowest so far in PBB's two-month history—and was booted out.

During Monday's press conference, Chx, 24, dressed in a skimpy black outfit, oozed with confidence and sexuality.

"I'm only wearing bra and panties under this dress," she said when asked what she was wearing under her outfit.

"I'm used to dressing up this way even before 'Pinoy Big Brother,'" said the former camp

Chx, A32

ALCALA: It's all over.

G.Velarde

'Festival of killings' in CL condemned

From page A1

Workers Union. At least seven people were killed when police and military dispersed striking workers at the Isuzumobile in Cabuyao.

Visiting the victims's shot Francisco Sierra, local chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) office on 9 a.m. yesterday in Angeles City in Pampanga. His companions, Dr. Abigail David and Fine Aiko Mantil, also were killed in the attack as they were talking in front of Sierra's house in Barangay Pulung Bulo. The gunmen, reported told, emerged from a grafted van once Sierra's house.

Sierra had at least nine bullet wounds. Witnesses to the gunmen identified by Bayan chairman as a lieutenant up president the Julius Rivera and shot him in the head.

Also yesterday in Bukidnon City, Norberto de Leon, president of the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng Tsuper at Operator sa Timog Bukidnon in Baloi, was shot dead at past 5 p.m. De Leon was also the provincial chair of the militant group Anakpawis.

De Leon, 55, was shot in the head and chest. The killers, a man and a woman, posed as passengers in De Leon's jeepney.

De Leon was the second transport leader killed in Bukidnon. Leonilo pedro Pamacpac Barangay was gunned on Sept. 15, a day after Pamacpac launched a regular strike on the.

The killings brought to 19 the number of activists killed in Central Luzon since Sept. 2, according to Efraim Villaseñor, Bayan Central Luzon chair, blamed the military for the "festival of killings" in the region, a charge the military has denied.

President orders probe

The Philippine National Police ordered a task force to investigate the killings.

Police Director General Arturo Lomibao also ordered Senior Supt. Herbert Bellad, head of the task force, to have no stone unturned, said Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapuz, Central Luzon police director.

Lomibao went to Subic City yesterday to confer with the family of Sumaoy, Lapuz said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, Lomibao said, had ordered a "thorough investigation" of the murder spree in the province.

"We're looking into the series of incidents as we can find out and ascertain the allegations of Bayan Muna," he said in a press conference.

Mayoyo condemns killing

Senator Secretary Angelo Reyes said the police would just use the same "magnitude of force, religion in force" of the victims.

The police urged the police not to jump into conclusions.

The former President's son, Dallas Rep. Rodrigo "Roddy" Aquino III, condemned the killing of farmers and urged law officials to put a stop to killings and other human rights violations in the province.

"I was really surprised and shocked. I did not expect this to happen since we were on our way to resolving the [labor] problem. Nobody wants this to go on for another year because everyone has suffered," he said in a press conference.

He said that despite the labor dispute in Hacienda Luisita, his group remains with Rivera were because "personal."

"Even during the height of the strike, I got feedback [that he never said something bad about me," the lawmaker said.

Representative Aquino said he had talked to the police to ensure that the killings and the harassment of militant groups in Tarlac would not happen again. "I'm assured that these [new deaths] have been happening with impunity."

He said that besides Rivera" murder, he was concerned about other reported killings and the attempts late week to arrest Rivera Bayan Muna's office in Tarlac.

Two empty shells

Senior Supt. Nicanor Bartolome, Tarlac police director, said investigators recovered two empty shells from an M-14 rifle at least seven meters from the car where Ramos was shot. The car was 400 meters from his house.

Bartolome said investigators were still gathering the statements of at least eight men, some of them Aquino bodyguards, who witnessed the attack took place.

Initially, the police reported that a lone assassin shot Ramos, barangay chair of the village.

Pulitzer Rep. Gen. Jovy Calimlim said Rivera, chief of the army's 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, in the killings.

"The pattern has been firmly established. Militant leaders are really the targets and this had been the trend in Eastern Visayas and Mindoro where General Palparan was previously assigned. Bayan is demanding his ouster and prosecution," Bolinao said.

Palparan, who was assigned to Central Luzon in September, has denied involvement in the killings of leaders and members of militant groups in the region. He says he has been targeted by communist rebels because of his campaign against them.

Killings not coincidental

Bayan Muna Rep. Joel Virador did not buy Palparan's claim that the killings in Central Luzon were merely "coincidences."

Virador said the generals's "cul. de sac" theory against members of legitimate people's organizations and unarmed mass even activities had been "demonstrated well enough in his previous stint as opponents."

"Palparan is the harbinger of death. The absence of any convincing response from the government seems to have emboldened him to commit more armed, vile, and with virtual impunity," he said.

He noted that last week, seven of armed men wearing bonnets tried to set fire on the Bayan Muna headquarters in Tarlac.

On Oct. 15, Flor Collantes, Bayan Muna secretary-general for Central Luzon, was gunned down. The day after, Rolly Bautista, a provincial officer of the party, was shot dead just outside his home, Pandan said.

Hold GMA accountable

Mr Arroyo should be held accountable for human' murder and the killing of farmers, and Bayan supporters Bautista and Jamed, Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo said.

"This is a clear escalation of the killings and the responsibility goes up to the President. We've raised this matter four times before the President but she has not taken any decisive steps to prevent the killings," Ocampo said at a press conference.

"The murders here [Luzon] province and this is her region! But these killings are happening," he said.

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran said Ramos' killing might have been meant to divide groups working Mr. Arroyo's ouster.

"[Ramos's] brutal killing is linked to the Arroyo government's desperate efforts to weaken the alliance between former President] Aquino and the military, the two main movement deterred against the soft-spot and illegitimate presidency," he said in a statement.

Beltran challenged Aquino to condemn the killing and support efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice. "Prove if they're Ocampos."

In a statement, Angie Ladera, secretary-general of the Workers Alliance in Region III (Wha-III), said Ramos lived an "unconspicuous life" and the unprovoked to settle the labor dispute at the sugar mill.

Funeral wreath

In June, Ladera said Ramos received a funeral wreath resting a large wreath and a note warning that his days were numbered.

Ladera said the note that Cadiz members received on Tuesday represented the management's position on the negotiations and months for the two-month pre-collective dispute.

The Department of Labor and Employment levied at least 8,000 bags of sugar kept inside the sugar mill.

Bolinao noted that the union strike was hit unjust from a military detachment.

Dogs

Soldiers, he said, fought the dogs in nearby houses apparently not for pictures that drove it but to remove them from the site. Their barks when strangers were around used to serve as a warning to farmers of possible invasion, Bolinao said.

Lt. Col. Pedro Bitanlo, public information chief of the military's Northern Luzon Command, ruled Bolinao's accusation "very unfair."

"The troops are always in the military is ordered not to hurt people," Monea said in a phone interview.

Bolinao, he said, would welcome any investigation if so ordered were named suspects in Ramos' killing.

Ladera said some of Ramos' true neighbors went to the military detachment after the slaying on Tuesday night. The soldiers were seen fleeing the area after the shooting, she said.

LIST OF MAJOR MILITANT LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF PARTY-LIST GROUPS

NAME	DATE	LOCATION
KILLINGS UNDER GMA		
1. Alejandro Ramirez	April 15, 2001	Mindoro Oriental
2. Rodel Valenzuela	April 17, 2001	Laguna City Area
3. Peter Cangatan	April 30, 2001	Batangas
4. Jaime Manalo Jr.	May 13, 2001	Leyte
5. Ricardo Romero	June 7, 2001	Laguna
6. Ernesto Mabito	June 25, 2001	Mindoro Oriental
7. Constancio Mabito	June 28, 2001	Mindoro Oriental
8. Romeo Obaya	June 29, 2001	Mindoro Occidental
9. Milagros Obaya	July 22, 2001	Laguna
10. Noel Sarmiento	August 7, 2001	Mindoro Oriental
11. Nicholas Kalanduyan	June 20, 2002	Bukidnon
12. Rogelio Calunsag	Oct. 6, 2003	Mindoro Oriental
13. Roger Fernando	Oct. 8, 2003	Mindoro Oriental
14. Felipe Lejo	Oct. 31, 2003	Mindoro Oriental
15. Rodolfo Jesus Galang	December 05, 2003	Antipolo City
16. Eraño Escribano	March 12, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
17. Ricardo Ramirez	March 15, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
18. Marlito Magpayo	March 25, 2004	Mindoro Occidental
19. Eduardo Antonio	April 6, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
20. Manuel Asuncion	April 8, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
21. Rolan Ilustrisimo	May 10, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
22. Rodrigo Sardinas	May 22, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
23. Rene Angelo Aquino	May 23, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
24. Ricardo Ramirez	May 25, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
25. Eduardo Antonio	June 27, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
26. Rizza Cornelio	August 29, 2004	Cebu
27. Bruno Sandalan	November 24, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
28. Ricardo Ramirez	November 25, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
29. Anthony Medrano	November 30, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
30. John Orillano	May 14, 2005	Bukidnon
31. Rhoda Bisa	Nov. 6, 2004	Iloilo City
32. Ricardo Ramirez	February 23, 2005	Bay, Laguna
33. Eric Bongolan	January 9, 2004	Bukidnon
34. Jose Magsalos	February 14, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
35. Lorenzo Ilao	February 15, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
ATTEMPTED KILLINGS		
36. Rolando Bunge	April 1, 2004	Compostela Valley
37. Jaime Bongolan	April 1, 2004	Sabi, Sarrosa Isla
38. Elizabeth Zamora	April 24, 2004	Compostela Valley
39. Ricardo Ramirez	April 24, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
40. Rogelio Perez	April 25, 2004	Mindoro Oriental
41. Gerardo Kalagan	May 15, 2004	Tagbilaran, Bukidnon
42. Ronny Rosales	May 15, 2004	Tagbilaran, Bukidnon
43. Marty Cavalay	June 8, 2004	Tagbilaran, Bukidnon
44. Pedrito Ignacio	January 9, 2004	Sta. Ignacio, Tarlac
45. Ronnie Arevalo	February 6, 2005	Lucena City, Quezon
46. Benito Sanchez	March 9, 2005	Pinamalayan, Mindoro
47. Ma. Nenita C. Obcena	March 14, 2005	Tuguegarao City, Cagayan
48. Alfredo Jimenez	April 16, 2005	Cotabato City, Cagayan
49. Pedro Mangaoang	May 19, 2005	Tuguegarao City, Cagayan
50. Norman Bisnar	Sept. 1, 2005	Barangay, Eastern Samar
51. Rolando Calderon	Oct. 15, 2005	Camarines, Cagayan
52. Francisco Ferrera	Oct. 26, 2005	Angeles City, Pampanga
DISAPPEARED		
1. Pedro Casano	December 2002	Concepcion, Tarlac
2. Dennis Cuevas	unknown	Brgy. Dennis, Cuevas, Aurora
3. Sherlito Gumanoy	April 21, 2003	Malaya, Oriental Mindoro
4. Melito Malgica	February 18, 2003	Sta. Cruz, Occidental Mindoro
5. Rodel Maganding	April 10, 2003	Pinagkaisang Samahan ng Mangingisda
6. Jose Bayanay Jr.	April 28, 2004	Calapan, Mindoro Oriental
7. Samuel Dumaliq	October 15, 2004	Makilala, Cotabato City
8. Jimmy Domingo	November 15, 2004	Jimenez, Zamboanga del Sur
9. Concepcion Bernabe	December 6, 2004	Jimenez, Zamboanga del Sur
10. Charlie Bernabe	December 6, 2004	Jimenez, Zamboanga del Sur
11. Sherlene Bernabe	December 6, 2004	Sta. Ignacio, Tarlac
12. Ronnie Bernabe	December 6, 2004	Sta. Ignacio, Tarlac
13. Francisco Cabrera	December 19, 2004	Mt. Cruz, Occidental Mindoro
14. Pablo Llanes	January 12, 2005	Iloilo
15. Conrado Ilustrisimo	February 14, 2005	Bongabon, Nueva Ecija
16. Ernesto Ilustrisimo	March 17, 2005	Bongabon, Nueva Ecija
KILLINGS		
1. Eduardo Arcega	December 7, 2003	Batangas
2. Rudy Dimaapi	August 23, 2004	Sta. Rosa, Laguna
ATTEMPTED KILLINGS		
MEMBERS / LISTED KILLINGS		
7 PEASANT AND MASS ORGANIZATION VICTIMS		
1. Alberto Mendoza	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
2. Jennifer Sanchez	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
3. Jaime Cortez	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
4. Antonio Cortez	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
5. Jaime Lara	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
6. Jane David	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
7. Antonio Cabanero Jr.	November 16, 2004	Tarlac City
8. Ernesto Cortez	March 13, 2005	Tarlac City
9. Ricardo Ramos	Oct. 26, 2005	Tarlac City

Senate releases . . .

From page A1

the agreement on July 21 nor was given authority by the President to negotiate or sign such an agreement.

"The President of the Philippines, presumably as a matter of policy, the majority has ordered the Senate agreement be executed," it said. "The personal damage to the country was thus averted."

Mystery donors

The majority sent the identity of the private donors who funded the agreement as well as the party who referred Senable to the government remained, the committee said. Therefore, it said it could not clear the inquiry.

The panel said that the Dinsbalonan and police secretary would be furnished a copy of the report "so they could take action."

"That's entirely up to the Dinsbalonan and Department of Justice," said Sen. Juliet Arroyo, the committee chair.

"She's a free man," said the jolt administration mastermind. "He's free as of now."

However, senses stressed the release was provisional. "We can't close the proceedings because of some unanswered questions and what is made clear is that the [Dinsbalonan] would warrant it. If the circumstances don't warrant it, that's it," he said.

Asked what those circumstances are, Arroyo replied, "We can't anticipate the conditions for all you know the conditions will no longer be relevant."

"There are so many problems facing the country, and the case of Gonzales might be just history," he said.

The release order, which was to be transmitted to the Philippine Prison Centers last night, end of Senates' confinement and possibly the Senate's standoff with Malacañang.

The committee cited Gonzales in contempt and ordered him detained for refusing to answer questions during the committee's only hearing on Sept. 22 on the contract.

Later that same day, the 38-year old Gonzales was ushered off to the Philippine Heart Center in Diliman City for hypertension. He has been confined there since.

The Senate's treatment of Gonzales drew protests from Malacañang. It was seen as a factor in the issuance of Executive Order No. 464 a week later. The latter administration, police and military officials from answering before congressional hearings without the President's consent.

Further tests needed

In its report, the 17-member committee noted that the Senate physician, Dr. Mariano Blanco Jr., concluded that Gonzales needed "continued medical attention" after visiting him and conferring with his cardiologist on Tuesday.

"On the basis of the Senate physician's report, the committee, for humanitarian considerations, hereby provisionally recommends to the Secretary of the Office of Senate Administrative . . . to enable him to avail [himself] of medical treatment of his choice," it said.

2 ex-agriculture execs evade Senate probe

From page A1

Department's P748-million fertilizer fund for farmers was directed to Senate President Blanquita Arroyo's presidential campaign last year.

The hearing, led by Senate committee on agriculture chairman Ramon Magsaysay Jr., was scheduled to start at 1 p.m.

Invited by the committee of Bolinao and Lorenzo Magsaysay said the Senate would not be the first time that he failed to appear before the committee.

"We will ask the Bureau of Investigation and Deportation to let us know upon their arrival here on what was his excuse then to not appear before us or to send a representative," Magsaysay said.

Lorenzo was on Cebu on Philippine Air 2938, which arrived at 12:54 p.m. Bolinao left at 12:30 a.m. via Philippine Airlines flight PR 102.

Special treatment

Bolinao also appeared to have received special treatment from some officials of the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa). He was allowed to use the Miaa Centennial Terminal 2's presidential lounge while awaiting his flight after it was delayed for more than two hours.

The presidential lounge is reserved for the use of the President, Vice President, heroes chief executives, visiting government officials, and other dignitaries.

A senior and Bolinao was booked on a first-class seat, allowing him to use PAL's Mabuhay Lounge, which is reserved for first-class and business-class passengers.

Miaa public affairs office head, Judith Jalbuena and airport general manager Alfonso Cusi had ordered an investigation as to how Bolinao was allowed to use the executive room. Jalbuena he "gave no satisfactory" for his use.

"He [Cusi] was not even aware that Mr. Bolinao was going to leave at that time," Dolor said.

Bolinao and Cusi are among the government officials identified with Pilot Intelligence Jose Miguel Arroyo, The following in the Boracay Club.

Pushing for free truth

In flying out of the country ahead of a Senate inquiry into the alleged misuse of agriculture funds, Bolinao has not only ended his reputation but also brokered suspicions "he was hiding" something, senators said.

The Senate committee on agriculture and food, together with the blue ribbon committee, previously closed with its afternoon hearing.

Magsaysay lamented that Bolinao chose the "path to being a fugitive from truth and justice," instead of shedding light on his role in the controversial disbursement of agriculture funds for vote-purchases.

"Instead of returning to and clarifying issues, he chose to fly," the senator said in an interview.

The inquiry was an offshoot of a report released by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, which showed that the budget department authorized the release of P728 million for the purchase of farm inputs and implements just a few months before the presidential election, but that this did not trickle down to the farmers.

Bolinao was designated by Lorenzo, then agriculture secretary, to handle the fund in the run-up to last year's elections.

Subpoenas

The Senate used to serve the subpoenas on Bolinao, now-former Agriculture Secretary Domini and investment officials by presiding over a luxury international conference at the Manila Philippine Plaza Hotel on Friday.

Apparently after getting wind of the Senate's plan to serve the subpoenas, Bolinao left the hotel. His lawyer, Antonio Zabala, received the subpoenas on his behalf, but he hinted his client would not be attending the hearing.

Bolinao, who resigned as agriculture undersecretary in September 2004, also snubbed the Senate's first hearing on Oct. 6. His lawyer had explained they were worried the invitation.

Bolinao denied his role in the alleged misuse of budgetary funds for vote-purchases.

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Apparently after getting wind of the Senate's plan to serve the subpoenas, Bolinao left the hotel. His lawyer, Antonio Zabala, received the subpoenas on his behalf, but he hinted his client would not be attending the hearing.

Bolinao, who resigned as agriculture undersecretary in September 2004, also snubbed the Senate's first hearing on Oct. 6. His lawyer had explained they were worried the invitation.

Bolinao denied his role in the alleged misuse of budgetary funds for vote-purchases.

"Instead of returning to and clarifying issues, he chose to fly," the senator said in an interview.

The inquiry was an offshoot of a report released by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, which showed that the budget department authorized the release of P728 million for the purchase of farm inputs and implements just a few months before the presidential election, but that this did not trickle down to the farmers.

Bolinao was designated by Lorenzo, then agriculture secretary, to handle the fund in the run-up to last year's elections.

Arrest warrant

In view of Bolinao's departure, Magsaysay said that he and the committee members would consider sending out an arrest warrant to compel Bolinao to appear in the next hearing.

"Since he did not give us reason, the next step would be to ask the security men to secure a warrant to arrest the hearings. In effect, an arrest," the senator said, but stressed that the matter would be decided by the entire committee.

Bolinao also accuser if the senator could be served abroad.

Without Bolinao, Magsaysay said that the Senate could still rely on other resource persons, including former agriculture, budget and audit officials, as well as farmers groups and non-government organizations, to get to the bottom of the anomaly.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibanez

78% of Iraqis approve new charter

BAGHDAD—IRAQ'S CONSTITUTION, A POST-Saddam Hussein milestone for the nation, has been adopted despite strong opposition from Sunni Arabs, officials said, while the number of US deaths in Iraq hit 2,000.

The American announced according to the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count website.

However, the official Pentagon count, last updated on Tuesday, remained at 1,991 military personnel killed and more than 15,000 injured since the start of the war.

US President George W Bush insisted that the war "will require more sacrifice, more time and more resolve" and that "the best way to honor the sacrifice of our fallen troops is to complete the mission." The joint submission prompted several US lawmakers to criticize the war policy.

"That is another tragic milestone in this costly war in which too much blood has been spilled in vain," said Democratic Senator Robert Byrd.

In Baghdad, electoral commission spokesperson Farid Ayyar announced that the near "will require more sacrifice, more time and more resolve" and that "the best way to honor the sacrifice of our fallen troops is to complete the mission." The joint submission prompted several US lawmakers to criticize the war policy.

Nationwide, 78 percent of Iraqis voted for the constitution, the commission said. A two-thirds majority voting against the constitution in at least three of Iraq's 18 provinces would have meant its rejection, a tally opponents failed to muster.

In the mainly Sunni northern province of Nineveh, which held the possible key to a rejection after an overwhelming "no" vote in two other provinces, just 55.06 percent voted "no." The United States and Britain were among the first to congratulate Iraq on the result.

"With their courageous vote, the Iraqi people have once again proved their determination to build a democracy united against extremism and violence," Bush said.

Britain's foreign secretary Jack Straw hailed the result as a vote and looked forward to "inclusive participation" in new elections to be held in two months' time.

But 3.1 million of Iraq's 15.5-million voters nonetheless opposed the constitution, largely as a result of fears among Sunni Arabs that it will place too much power in the hands of regions and lead to a break-up of Iraq.

"The referendum failed to a significant of a point," said political science professor Hasan Bilawi. AFP

Another bird flu outbreak in China

BEIJING—CHINA HAS REPORTED deadly bird flu in chickens and ducks in a village in the central province of Hunan, the Hong Kong government said, on the heels of another outbreak in an eastern province.

The World Health Organization has said the H5N1 strain of bird flu is endemic in poultry in China and across much of Asia, and it could only be a matter of time before it develops the ability to pass easily from human to human.

China notified Hong Kong of the latest outbreak on Tuesday, the government said.

"We understand that a total of 607 chickens and ducks showed signs of illness, of which 540 died. A total of 2,607 birds in the same batch, including the sick ones, were culled," the government said in a statement late on Tuesday.

It did not identify the village.

China, separately reported on Tuesday an outbreak among farm geese in the eastern province of Anhui but said it had been brought under control with no reported human infections.

Ten days Hong Kong has banned all live poultry imports from the mainland after the outbreak in Qinghai and in northwestern Inner Mongolia.

China's attempts to control the emergence of the SARS virus in 2003 have prompted fears among some experts that it has had more bird flu cases than officially recorded.

But experts and UN officials said they believe China is better prepared and more open than in 2003.

Local governments across China have set up monitoring stations to check poultry and people, Chinese authorities say. Reuters

Europe bans bird imports

BRUSSELS—THE EUROpean Union agreed Tuesday to stop a ban on pet bird imports from the rest of the world. In an latest attempt to stop the spread of avian influenza across Europe.

The ban, initially valid for a month, came amid reports of a possible outbreak in Germany which, if confirmed, would be the first among birds in the wild in western Europe.

Colonies were raised by the discovery of a lethal strain of bird flu in a parrot that died while in quarantine in Britain last week.

The EU import ban was agreed in Brussels by environment experts from the EU's 25 member states, based on proposals drawn up urgently by the European Commission following the British case.

"These measures... aim to strengthen further the EU's defenses against avian influenza," said the environment his statement.

The global ban on pet bird imports, confirmed into Tuesday by the EU's Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health, will remain into force in west at formally approved by the EU commissioners in the next few days.

Under the measures, pet owners would only import their birds on permit and would have to provide certificates proving that the birds were not infected.

The deal does the ban to through quarantine centers and schools are large scale imports," commission spokesperson Philip Tod said. About 200,000 pet and exotic birds have been imported into the EU over the past three months. AFP

US, France threaten sanctions on Syria

UNITED NATIONS—THE UNITED States and France on Tuesday circulated a draft resolution in the UN Security Council demanding that Syria arrest any of its nationals suspected of involvement in the murder of former Lebanese premier Rafiq Hariri.

The draft was worked out by the US and French UN envoys—John Bolton and Jean-Marc de la Sablière—after the Security Council heard a briefing by UN chief investigator Detlev Mehlis on his damning report implicating senior Syrian and Lebanese security officials in last February's slaying.

The Tough text, a copy of which was obtained by AFP, is being co-sponsored by Britain, diplomats said.

It called on Syria to "detain those Syrian officials or individuals whom the (UN inquiry) commission might consider as suspected of having been involved in this terrorist act, and enable them fully and unconditionally available to the commission," it added.

It demanded that the Mehlis commission be allowed by Damascus "to interview Syrian officials or other individuals that the commission deems relevant to the inquiry outside Syria and/or outside the premises of any other Syrian official if the commission so requests."

The draft also called for sanctions by all states against all individuals designated or who might be designated in the future by the council as suspects in the murder.

The sanctions include a travel ban and a freeze of assets.

The draft also said Syria must stop meddling in Lebanese domestic affairs, directly or indirectly, refrain from any attempt aimed at destabilizing Lebanon and respect its neighbor's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.

The text stipulated that to ensure the Mehlis panel's effectiveness it must enjoy full cooperation from Syrian authorities, including full access to all information and evidence in their possession as well as freedom of movement throughout Syrian territory. AFP

KASHMIR boys carry a bag containing clothes of an earthquake-devastated Muzaffarabad, the capital of Kashmir on Oct. 31.

London bom

LONDON—THE ALLEGED BOMBERS OF THE July 7 London bombers who murdered in an unprecedented suicide spree last year, the BBC reported on Tuesday.

Mohammed Sidique Khan, 30, was severely ill[illegible] and recorded speaking to a British-based terrorist suspect, a source told the British Broadcasting Corporation.

The investigation suggested that he was in contact with activists from Al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden's global terror network, for five years before the London blasts which killed 52 commuters and the four bombers themselves.

Khan "had extensive contacts with an international

WORLDBRIEFS

Court convicts 4 Arabs

DUESSELDORF, Germany—A German state court on Wednesday convicted four Arab men of plotting to attack Jewish targets in Germany and found three of them guilty of supporting a terrorist organization. The men were handed sentences ranging from five to eight years in prison. Three of the group were also found guilty of belonging to[illegible]

Ex-Khmer Rouge arrested

PHNOM PENH—A former Khmer Rouge commander was arrested in February of the 1994 murders of three Western backpackers but on the run from authorities was arrested Tuesday in Cambodia, an official told AFP. Cambodia's Supreme Court ordered one-time guerrilla Chhouk Rin jailed for life for abduction and murder of an Australian, British and Frenchman earlier this year but authorities had not managed to capture the 47-year-old. "He was arrested this afternoon (Tuesday) at 1:00 p.m. (0600 GMT) in Chhlar Mreashey province," Interior ministry spokesperson Khieu Duphaet said.

Moroccan employees kidnapped

DUBAI—Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's al-Qaeda group in Wednesday claimed responsibility in an Internet statement for the kidnapping of two employees of the Moroccan embassy in Baghdad. "Your brothers in the military branch of the al-Qaeda group (in Iraq) have detained two Moroccans working for the Moroccan embassy in Baghdad," the statement by the group's website and signed by the group's spokesperson Abu Maisara al-Iraqi said. The authenticity of the statement could not be verified. Earlier the Moroccan foreign affairs ministry said that the two employees had disappeared on the road between the Jordanian capital Amman and Baghdad—a road widely feared for repeated kidnap[illegible] gangs carried out by ordinary criminals or insurgents. The embassy identified the pair as driver Abdelrahim Bouatia and agent Abdelkrim El Mesbahi.

UN action sought on murder

BAGHDAD—A group of former foreign leaders backing the defense of ousted Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein called Tuesday for a UN probe into the murder of an attorney and key[illegible] after Mohammed Dahmus lawyers have appealed for UN protection following the kidnapping and murder of Saddam Jumeili just a day after the dramatic opening of the trial of Saddam and seven former cohorts and aides. An investigation into the attacks was "urgent and necessary," the former foreign leaders and ministers wrote in a letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Russia sued in US court

WASHINGTON—Investors in oil-linked shares of Russia's Yukos Oil[illegible] alleging massive fraud by Russian officials in[illegible] of their oil giant without compensating shareholders, lawyers said Tuesday. The suit filed in Washington[illegible] of shares known as American Depositary Receipts (ADRs), most of whom are US citizens, [illegible] billion as a result of the "de facto nationalization" of the oil company. Named as defendants in the suit are the Russian Federation, the state-controlled firms Gazprom and Rosneft. Rosneft and Rosneftgaz as well as top officials of the companies, according to a statement from the Washington law firm Covington and Burling.

Question of the Week

Do you agree with the dispersal and use of water cannons against a procession by the clergy and citizens in Mendiola last week?

Send[illegible] of at least 20 words as published in Tuesday's InqBox to[illegible] and receive an "Inquirer Shirt"!

evacuation camp in Pakistan-administered

UN raises aid request for Pakistan quake victims

GENEVA—THE UNITED NATIONS raised its appeal for emergency relief for Pakistani earthquake victims to more than half a billion dollars Wednesday amid warnings that time is running out for millions of injured or homeless people.

"The revised appeal is $549.6 million," Elisabeth Byrs, a spokesperson for the UN humanitarian coordinator's office (OCHA) told AFP. "The needs are growing and many agencies are not being financed," Byrs added.

The request will be made to donor nations at a meeting in Geneva later on Wednesday, nearly three weeks after the quake destroyed Pakistani Kashmir, leaving 54,000 people dead and some 77,000 injured.

Relief agencies are trying to rush shelter and medical treatment to villages in the mountainous region before they are cut off by winter snow within around three weeks.

The UN has been struggling to fill its current appeal of $312 million for emergency relief over six months and says the shortage is slowing the relief effort.

It has received $68 million in committed cash and another $201 million in pledges from donors. The total amount represents just 17 percent of the new appeal, Byrs underlined.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is due to press appeals for a speedier response during the meeting with 65 countries.

Pakistan's Senate chairman, Mohammad Soomro, and Minister for Economic Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar, are expected to outline the extent of destruction of life and property in Pakistan caused by the 7.6 magnitude earthquake.

The quake devastated an area of more than 28,000 sq km, depriving more than 1.1 million people of their jobs and reducing thousands of schools and hospitals to rubble, according to Pakistani officials.

"We need to sensitize the international community about the continuing and urgent need for humanitarian intervention to save lives, to provide shelter, and to stem the spread of disease," said Masood Khan, Pakistan's ambassador to the UN in Geneva.

Byrs said the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), which is delivering urgently needed tents for about 3.3 million homeless people in Pakistani Kashmir, and the World Food Programme, which provides food rations, were short of funding.

Bad weather has been forecast in the region this week, while snowfall is expected to ground most of the 100 or so helicopters ferrying help to isolated villages in the region by the middle of next month, according to the UN.

Aid workers have predicted a "second wave" of deaths if severely injured in isolated villages are left without care or shelter in the freezing cold of the Himalayan foothills.

French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy and his Swiss counterpart Micheline Calmy-Rey head the list of ministers and senior national development or relief officials from western countries due at the Geneva meeting. AFP

ber filmed in intelligence operation

jihadi network which British intelligence either missed or ignored", the BBC said.

He featured in a surveillance operation by intelligence services, according to the joint radio and television investigation.

The BBC's source said he had seen photographs and transcripts of a meeting between Khan and the suspect, who could not be named for legal reasons.

When the suspect was detained last year, the source said Khan contacted him demanding an urgent meeting, wanting to know what the security services found out about the suspect.

The BBC said that on both occasions when the source met Khan, he had three other men with him, who were not the three police named as the other London bombing suspects—raising the possibility that three other Khan associates "are still on the loose." The BBC said there was no independent corroboration that Khan was recruited talking to the terror suspect.

However, the report said that if correct, it would amount to "a serious failure of intelligence" leading up to the July bombings.

The information "would show the intelligence services had him well in their sights but allowed him to slip away".

Terror suspect Nasir Abbas, held in Indonesia over the 2002 Bali bombings, alleged that Khan travelled to Malaysia and the Philippines in 2001 to meet leaders of the extremist Islamist group Jemaah Islamiyah, closely linked to al-Qaida, the report said.

The BBC interviewed Singapore-based academic researcher Dr Rohan Gunaratna, who spoke to Abbas after the July attacks.

"He was received by Hambali who is the operation leader of Jemaah Islamiyah," Gunaratna told the BBC.

Alongside Abbas, he visited a training camp in the Philippines run by al-Qaida trainers, Gunaratna said.

The report also alleged that when Khan visited Pakistan in 2003 he met an Islamic extremist and al-Qaida fixer currently in US custody. AFP

A10
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2005
INQUIRER
OPINION

Passport to prosperity?

IS AN OVERSEAS JOB TRULY A PASSPORT TO A better life?

Few Filipinos would doubt it, as the long lines at the offices of job recruitment agencies attest. Now the World Bank has come up with figures to support a fact already widely known to every neighborhood: families of overseas Filipino workers earn higher incomes than most others, and their members are healthier and better educated.

EDITORIAL

A World Bank study, based on family incomes in 1997 and 1998, found that 51 percent of Filipino households which had at least one member working abroad could be counted among the country's top 25 percent family income earners; while 28 percent belonged to the next 25 percent. In fact, the $778 average annual income of an OFW family member was more above that of others, which announced to only $456 a year. And while 31 percent of the families whose members stayed home remained poor, only 9 percent of OFW families couldn't cross the poverty line.

Even external shocks, like the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which sent the value of the peso down, seemed to have a positive economic impact, according to the World Bank study. Because of increased remittances of OFWs and, consequently, the higher budgets available to their families, the number of poor declined by 8.6 percent with every 10 percent increase in the peso equivalent of their foreign exchange remittances. This was because the higher exchange rate induced OFWs and their families to invest in some modest enterprises like taxi and minibus services and small manufacturing activities, like dressmaking, tailoring and food processing. (There's even something for those whose families remained intact. The study noticed that many of them received gifts from OFWs or their families.)

So is overseas employment, perhaps, the magic carpet that will carry almost a third of our people out of their poverty?

There is hardly any need for further evidence to show that overseas employment has allowed hundreds of thousands of Filipino families to advance miserably. Neither can it be denied that their foreign exchange remittances have propped up the peso and kept the economy afloat, contributing as much as 10 percent to the country's GNP. And now, in the absence of any study to contradict the findings of the World Bank, it has to be accepted that the deployment of Filipino workers overseas has helped reduce the rate of poverty.

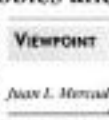
But has a similar effort been attempted to minimize the costs as well? How many families have been broken by the absence of the father or mother, or both? How many children have dropped out of school or fallen into drug addiction for lack of parental advice or supervision? And how long can the nation sustain this policy of sending the unemployed—and the unhappily employed—abroad?

The World Bank study said 31 percent of our overseas workers had some college education and another 30 percent had a college degree. In a country where only 1 out of every 10 people earns a college degree, that is a heavy drain on our educated manpower. Unless we can replenish our stock of brain power as quickly as it is being depleted, we may be undermining our own capacity to grow and develop, or even just to function, as a nation.

The gathering crisis in our health sector, caused by the exodus of doctors and nurses, is an omen of even worse things to come. The government ought to draw up a comprehensive program that would not only seek to at least replace the professionals and technical people that we lose but also to keep those we have—by enabling them to earn attractive and rewarding.

Filipino officials never fail to hail OFWs as heroes who help shore up the economy. Before we know it, we may be needing heroes who will save our people.

Pebbles and diamonds



VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

WHICH PHILIPPINE CITY TRACKED THE health and growth of 5,000 kids for almost a generation and, in the process, reshaped policies and research programs, here and abroad?

Cebu City did, says the forecaster. Its "Longitudinal Health and Nutrition Survey" anchored the findings of Harvard researchers that a one-cent dribble is worth "a drop of pure gold."

Economic spin-offs from vaccination cum up a 12:4 percent immediate rate of return, report Harvard's David Bloom, Darrel Canning and Mark Weston. They had modeled two long term vaccination programs, one of them in Cebu. The return rate would total 38 percent in 11 years.

Started in 1983 by San Carlos University, the study "follows the lives of 3,327 Filipino mothers and those of their children born in 1983 and 1984 (to 30 teenagers)," the British opinion magazine notes.

"Among the data collected (over the last 11 years by UC's Office of Population Studies) were records of the vaccinations these children received as infants and their scores in language, maths and IQ tests at the age of 11."

Vaccination spurs savings and investments, the Harvard researchers conclude. It also speeds up the "demographic transition"—the shift from large to small families that economic development triggers.

These findings reinforce the $13 billion Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization program—a 10-year bid to vaccinate children in 70 of the world's poorest countries against a range of childhood diseases.

"The dispassionate economic case for vaccination, therefore, looks at least as strong as the compassionate medical one," the Economist notes.

"It seems incredible," Jun Paz Ilarde notes. "But parochial Cebu officials roamed along Mandilla-seaward of this redoubt most under their noses—and failed to see the gold in the streets. But then, the Hindi are no different between pebbles and diamonds."

Scholars and policy makers elsewhere were, however, getting answers. Many held that the potential for catch-up growth after age 2 was limited, especially where children are raised in poverty, says Scott Cawley, Emory University's Linda Adair. The Cebu study demonstrated "there's a large potential in catch-up growth in preschool-aged years."

In her paper "Investing Infant and Child Mortality," UP Population Institute's Josefina Cabigon cites, among other aspects, the Cebu study and concludes: "While other countries have undergone dramatic bouts in survival and economic (growth), the Philippines has faltered ...and followed a path of crossing plateaus in infant and child mortality levels."

"The Sen Paul Nobel Prize-winning economic egg was based in large part on research conducted in Cebu City," economist Barry Poplin at University of North Carolina writes in Cebu's business quarterly.

The Cebu research was "instrumental in (the) heroic recovery of (1) dental policy related to breast milk substitutes and Asian Tsunami breast bank programs or early childhood development. Inter-governmental clashes are extremely rare," he adds.

Pros can nonetheless turn. The Cebu study inspired Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs, provided by the late self-effacing prize-demographer Fr Wilhelm Flieger, SVD. Young Filipino demographers, trained by that scholar, trailed the customers over two decades.

USC's Socorro Tolibano and Josefina Arevalo conducted interviews in 1991-92, and again in 1994-95 to explore changes. Researchers followed in 2002. "Children of the ongoing study are now adults," they note. "Some have dropped out of school. Others have become parents."

By the mid-'90s, this study, over a generation produced, 10 Ph.D. dissertations, reports—and counting. They've been published and read all over: in Oxford University, Journal of Development Economics and New Zealand University of Waikato...except by Cebu's officials.

A (recent) 2005 search reveals that researchers continue to mine this rich lode for answers on problems ranging from infant deaths and food, to psychological studies of adult diseases, etc.

The Regional Central American Institute, for example, matched the Cebu data with those of villages in Guatemala. Egypt applied the Cebu methodology to gauge the effects of water and sanitation on children. Beyond demographics, amid the material on nurse household regressions and matched women's resource position.

Prophets, however, are ignored in their own countries. Until his death in 1989, Father Flieger didn't raise a blip on the radar of Inquirer-era Cebu politicians. Yet, he published hundreds of articles about their countryside.

In "The Measurement of Cebu," Father Flieger worked new tools for analyzing upland movements. (1991 updated his "Cebu," a socio-economic profile based on census data.

Father Flieger co-authored "World Population" with Harvard University's professor emeritus Nathan Keyfitz. Keyfitz says "the resilient, and have the sanction of others I was president," Keyfitz wrote after the former's death. "Of all the students who sat in my classes, he was far beyond his teacher."

Despite the punishing workload, Father Flieger found a parish that lacked a priest. Twice a week, he got into his little "Volkswagen and drove to upstate near Oslob (airport where he ministered to a congregation that could not "not have appreciated his purposefulness."

"Father Flieger was priest, scientist, teacher and Good Samaritan," a friend once said. Unfortunately, Cebu's leaders still remain unable to tell the difference between pebbles and diamonds.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Clarifications

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WHY SERIOUS DEBATE CALLING FOR SNAP election today, I have to clarify my stand on it, something I have been advocating for some time now. My position is completely different from the one being bandied about today.

The notion of different cases. We must subject any measure to be called of the presidency—though in her case that remains hugely arguable—and she would have an audience someone who has patently committed the crime. "So is elections, yes to coalition," GMA herself says, as though stealing the vote could be vaccinated by sharing the spoils with others. "Still, one can't say that doesn't work in this country.

But why should we sell the permission of a squatter to enter her? All those schemes—and nowhere does the word "schemes" apply more than to anything else than to the Senate of Mike Velarde—that call for GMA to accept snap elections are destined to fail. If indeed they are not veiled invitations for GMA to manipulate things in snap elections.

My example of elections is something that takes place after GMA is ousted from Malacañang, one that any caretaker government should implement at the soonest possible time. An interim government that lasts for more than a few months is as much a threat to this country as GMA.

A saving thought, as I see it, never two basic functions. The first is that it restores order to this much disordered universe, or vertigo, it is the compass, protect, and only answer is the problem. The problem is that we do not have an elected president. The answer is to have an elected president. The problem is that an injustice has been done to the voters, the answer is to give justice to the voters. The problem is that the people have been removed from the equation in this country. Free elections no longer depend on their will but are formulated in advance. The answer is to bring the people back into the equation. Let us have elections—and the people will vote out of her life. Hello Garci and life in the Cosmos.

But the call for snap elections serves one other vital function, which is to remove GMA from office. (Clean) elections after GMA puts on the only conditions can see the people up to make sure GMA goes. So either she's out or has the capacity to make action. Why should I risk life and limb just to put a transitional government in place? I will only risk life and limb to make sure that we will replace a usurper with a legitimate ruler. Clean elections are the Good Friday Deal, which is how People Power began. Because we have to have both God and Evil to have People Power. A story of Evil alone does not hook it, which is why more and more people about GMA's wrongdoing aren't hurting her anymore. You need to posit a Good against her Evil to get her out. Clean elections is that Good. Clean elections is that good enough.

But how do you get GMA out to have clean elections afterward?

Well, to repeat, you need to pose clean elections as the alternative. That is not an option, that is necessity.

As for the details, that is something we can argue in our hearts' content. I personally do not blame those who have given up on anything but a military solution to stop someone who will bring the country down the gutter first before the extrajudicial power. This cannot be natural resistance to anything resembling a coup has been obliterated by the fact that what we have now is a coup, albeit one wrought with the aid of the Comelec rather than the AFP. It is a coup by consent.

But I myself have not given up on People Power. At the very least, I have not given up on People Power in the traditional sense of people taking to the streets to oust a tyrant. As God is a particular column, I do not believe that PP-Edsa Shrine has become apathetic and indifferent to storming the gates of hell to reach heaven. What I believe is that Filipinos have not been given a good to embrace along with my feel in case to the line of hell. They have not been given a hope and dream to cling to, along with the determination and desperation they exhibit. I go back to clean elections affording that hope and dream.

More than this, I must certainly have not given up on People Power in the non-traditional sense of the citizens refusing to be good citizens to a bad regime. To this day, I cannot understand why my group protesting GMA has literally called for a civil disobedience campaign. Why do we have to march to Mendiola to press who clothes when all we need to do is refuse to pay income taxes, refuse to pay dues to collaborationist professional and civic organizations, beg for government workers, refuse to pay fines for parole (they would do better asking their flock to look for Jesse Corte in other ways), refuse to acknowledge that DBM exists. The idea that that will have no strong with GMA is a myth. No—no and nothing can hurt as much than GMA. All those well-meant is that we will provide GMA and her cabal, which include their allies in Congress, with no money to steal and wages all people to keep passive.

Why should the citizens be passive but active consumers who simply walk in and without a murmur? Indeed, who refuses to stop down amid the most universal call by the populace for her to do so?

To her "I will not resign" we can always reply, "I will not obey."

Wise Noli

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO APPARENTLY has more hidden traps rather than many cobwebs to him. He has now through the plan of a powerful bungee rush to reduce him to a mere puppet. By double-talk and double-meaning, at some point, the proposal, especially discussion and result by mere two-thirds count of to be headed by Franklin Drilon, former President Aquino's undisguised mistake. But as he correctly put it, "I'm not an option." "To refuse to be an option is to be an option," he added. "I'm their key group," to him. Joker denies calls for 300 or so members of the Black and White Movement.

* * *

Last week, former President Fidel V. Ramos was quoted as saying that President Macapagal-Arroyo should make the "supreme sacrifice" of running her term alone in 2007, as the country shifts to the parliamentary system. But Ramos was also reported as saying that he will not run as vice-president and he backs GMA and Eddie Cuisia to resign, so that Drilon could assume the presidency and call an election in 45 days. So more or less, Ramos is also supporting the Drilon-for-Chanter change. Were PVR's words twisted, or are media are wont to do these days?

But even assuming that GMA resigns, which she will not, and Drilon takes over, will he be able to do what he promised to do? Will he be able to (on the same) bring about the give-up a post vs which he was elected? PVR's recent statements have made some people suspect that his ingoing, handpicked Senate President Manuel Villar (1992), now exacting her pound of flesh and that's why he is now pushing for Drilon to assume the presidency. But Drilon is unacceptable to many sectors, as the minority of his own colleagues GMA to Drilon is still with.

* * *

The idea of a caretaker Drilon is being peddled not just by his supporters but also by PMRM and El Shaddai. Even Cardinal Vidal has been also reported that Ramos-Cardinal visit has joined the call. Cardinal's archbishop has vehemently denied this, stressing that he adheres to the CBCP position, which is that GMA is constitutionally to see ongoing problems, such as poverty and the adverse effects of the FTAA, for politically realism that a coup exercise cannot be held legally without amending the Constitution. In the unlikely event of a GMA resignation, moreover, Cuisia should take over and it leaves the post of VP vacant (the post Drilon is angling for?). But GMA has made it clear she's not resigning and so, says Macapagal, in the absence of any constitutional or statutory provisions, "she cannot be compelled to agree to any call to shorten her term." I suspect that's why Chanter could affect GMA's term by simply declaring that the "dangerous precedent" to shorten an official's senate by attending the Chanter, as it could start a never-ending cycle of ousters and resignations.

To solve the constitutional problem, Alfredo Lim suggested to allow a snap poll. To which Ramos members voted, "We're satisfied with a plan, which we can live with." Meaning, why amend only to suit the ambitions of Drilon? Despite Drilon's personal lack of popularity and his substantial reputation, it's no good for GMA to look an appreciative of all the unqualified support JDV and his wife Cleo have given her in her political saga.

* * *

Bishop Jesse believes that Bishops for the Big Prospect Pedro Tabuena for the Senate's leadership only, which appears to have been clarified, was not without the blessing of vice Cardinal Jose Advincula, who is said to be his bosom friend. But upon Pedro Tabuena's return back to the country, to his usual reputation, it's no good for GMA to look an appreciative of all the unqualified support JDV and his wife Cleo have given her in her political saga.

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If our fellow colleagues who have already passed the initiating requirements and foreign medical schools are any indication, it is only because our staff would be greatly underrepresented there would be a crisis in our company.

But even with the relatively higher compensation we are receiving compared to the pay of public and private hospitals, we can still be financially comfortable.

At this point, the issue is not just the shortage of physicians. The problem stems from the entire system of health care because allied health professionals are also leaving. To provide decent health care to our people, the country needs a team of health care professionals. And I am afraid that we are in the danger of not having enough of the team members to provide excellent health care, particularly as the underprivileged under our present circumstances.

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We could at the least challenge or assail the attention of everyone concerned. But we don't have the luxury of time because we are losing more and more of the number of our people with our every action are being depleted, on top of trying to make both ends meet.

In the current political arena, opinion makers and analysts have been talking about the "tipping point" when the risk and reward in staying in power will be greater than the risk and reward in leaving power. This has made me wonder which will be the tipping point of the issue of emigration of doctors and when it will begin to be unbearable.

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Some people appeal to one sense of patriotism or disunion us from leaving, but this ignores the reality that most, if not all, of us are financially responsible for some other family members behind. Others appeal to our professional service and graduation, but this would have to be rightwing one's girlfriend after—right? But the more is still slip from your fingers. It is not a lack of love for country that is making us leave. What is lacking is concern in the lack of opportunities for professional development and nothing drastic increase for ourselves and our families.

Dr. Eugene A. Pet, 39, is and was Vice Medical Consulting Corp. and works as medical physician of the Asian Medical Center. He is also Philippine Co. Inc.

No money, no opportunity

PRESIDENT REPORTS ABOUT PHYSICIANS LEAVING AS nurses and *the difficulty of hiring new ones* highlight the enormity of the problem of scarcity of doctors in our country. Looking for greener pastures in the attendance of young doctors leaving the country. Many graduates of Saint Luke's working for almost two years now, for example, there used to be 30 doctors. Two have left for the United States ... one as a nurse and the other as intended to follow suit ... one has left again—and the third is to work as a physician in southern town. Among the seven of us left here, three have already passed the nursing board exams, and two are planning to take take upgrading.

Only I and another colleague are left to pursue our medical career. I still want to train in an internship, cardiologist and my friend wants to go into ER medicine. But our window is depressing fast, since it is becoming clear that there is nothing for us here—no opportunity for us to grow professionally, no chance for the date of training abroad for a better opportunity and a higher compensation. There are still opportunities for physicians abroad after all.

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YOUNG BLOOD

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Enriching the earth with our bodies

HUMAN FACE

Msr. Coreen P. Reyes

"YOU ARE NOTHING BUT AN INFINITESIMAL combination of earth's rocks, water and air," these are nevertheless pieces of evolutionary significance, since "from the inorganic substances, new forms of life... bounty comes in knowing what you are and where you came and why you be, earth's dust." —Walt Whitman

Having the long wonderful dead: what we have to our dear deceased, is bittersweet as we ponder on our mortality and immortality.

In the film "The Lion King," King Mufasa gives Simba, the future Lion King of Pride Rock, a lesson on the circle of life: "We are all connected in the great circle of life, and when you come and why you be, earth's dust." —Walt Whitman

Thus, the feelings are so mysterious when it comes to the option of "the circle." By opting not to go back to the earth, humans have cut themselves off from the great circle. Buried practices have deprived our living planet of the essential elements it deserves.

The land revolution tell us that the best way to have the dead is to dig a hole in the ground, gently lay the dead in there and cover it with soil, and let nature do the rest. Through the help of different elements and participants in the earth's life giving process. We consign a corpse to an airless, colorless tomb where it cannot enrich our true life for us?

Thus, in the Roman religion, there will be a "Final Reconciliation," one, but in the meantime people can help make little resurrections happen every day. Doesn't the Bible say: "Before the grave of the earth, the dead will be raised"? The urban burial way to decay tomorrow by the sacred body that we give it back to the earth's great embrace?

Until some decades ago, Christianity, Catholicism in particular, set before eyes the resurrection of the literal understanding of the resurrection of bodies on the Final Judgment and reservation for the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, that environmental awareness was literally and the new fields of theology of creation and "spiritual-ity."

Mortuary challenged the belief (of those against cremation) that on the Last Day God will resurrect the people's bodies like women made of prefabricated materials. Thus, they will be ready for the Final Banquet recipes. "We must bear in mind that our bodies are developed by time months in the womb of our biological mothers and that all the chemicals and minerals in our bodies came from the earth that has undergone evolution for billions of years."

Embalming polluted tombs to enclose bodies in cast. Non-only do cemeteries and memorial parks destroy valuable farmlands, as mentioned, they effectively stop the natural recycling of dead bodies as we continue to amend ecology.

As to cremation the thing? If the ashes that carry out of the incinerator are kept in urns and churches and can't returned to the earth or are where they should go, then we are no better.

In India, the Parsis (the Zoroastrians had to begin using to Persia) give their dead a "sky burial" at "Towers of Silence." Five-hundred cities from across The Ganges River, the Hindu's holiest river, than their come out as bird- that their would feed, as the earth.

Mortuary served at this "environmentally sensitive" disposal. It consists of the "Tower of Silence" and the Mortuary, being eaten by various vultures birds doesn't seem right.

Mortuary wants to be buried in a cast field. People's requirements for "Lasting Repose" to open their bodies to the birds. Need is limited, it's said. If an big dead party just want to see they would have much fresh, what's wrong with doing the same with human remains? Where they break down into elementals, they are as good as any others for the buyer but the soil that it has enriched has nourishes the tree.

Remember, ecology is more dependent, interconnectedness, total creation. As Chief Seattle said, "All things are connected like the blood which unites one's family. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth." And whatever is given back returns again and again and lives forever.

Send feedback to coreenpr@inq7.com.ph

China's aborted openness

COMMENTARY

Li Maosong

CHINA'S STATE-RUN XINHUA NEWS AGENCY recently reported on a government-run organization whose setting of harvest are librarians and volunteers in the village of Liuzi, Shandong province. The object of the investigations—and to have begun days after the kidnapping of Chen Guangcheng, a blind activist who had exposed the forced abortions of the victims—and the motive of the report seemed the impression of greater government responsiveness and better-informed media. A true impression, taken at face.

According to reports, local authorities in Linyi, seeking to avoid exposing Chen's home under Chen's "one-child" policy forced several women and couples with more than one child to undergo sterilization and abortion. Chen and his wife claim that the campaign reportedly new their family members jailed. There were allegations of beating (miscarriages, torture and starvation.

The investigation and report this wouldn't "No Silence reports, I believe, are here cast as damage control.

China is trying to restore funding from the United Nations to improve reproductive health—an effort that has been on hold for reports of forced abortions. Current authorities do not investigate the Linyi area, except some of them abduction—with the help of the propaganda—spread this international media.

I had reported on the abuses in Linyi earlier and asked a non-governmental organization, the Citizens' Right Defense Group, to investigate. The group went to Linyi in May. A month later, the second-in-command of Chinese Human Rights Defenders reported that Chen's wife, Yuan Weijing, received information of the arrest of the group's family Planning Commission (FPC).

As a volunteer for the network, I was in touch with Chen and his wife almost every day by using hiding failed to elicit any government response. Chen began seeking legal aid from prominent lawyers to prepare lawsuits on behalf of the victims, naming those among local officials. Pressed by the police, Chen went into hiding.

The question for those allies are asking is, if GMA spends the term, why not also give a chance to run our tasks for her? Perhaps JDV's earlier statement that Chanter change presents an opportunity to vie for a term short, should she want to, did not sit well with GMA. But if she is to protect your friends on real treasuries because they are in her.

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Li Maosong is a human rights researcher who specializes in reproductive rights and gender issues in disadvantaging women. She taught philosophy at the People's University in Beijing.

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Forests are primarily for environment protection

LETTERS

THIS REFERS TO THE ARTICLE "Deforestation doesn't trigger floods, UP report says." (STA, 10/14/05)

By belittling the significance of logging bans on the basis of its findings that forests do not prevent flooding, the UP Panel and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) has not only done forest conservation efforts a great disservice. Worse, it has given governments and the logging industry an "authoritative" ground to justify more logging, even in heavily deforested countries such as the Philippines.

The report effectively dismissed logging bans when it states that "when it comes to prevention of major floods, the 'sponge theory' is ... often inappropriately used to justify soil and water conservation measures, forest management or ecological functions." Logging bans, however, are not imposed to prevent floods but to give time for the forest to regrow in order to prevent the loss of biodiversity and—as stated in the report—to reduce sedimentation which has adverse effects on aquatic life, reservoir life, potable water quality, irrigation quality and navigation.

Logging bans are imposed in order to protect the forests, which provide a multitude of important environmental services—regardless of whether or not they prevent floods. Logging bans may or may not be the last remaining remedy against ever-logging illegal or illegal. And, if coupled with strong law enforcement, could be the effective initial step to curb illegal logging.

At present, we do not intend to take a position on the scientific findings of the UP-MG/CIFOR report. But since the report asserts that—as a natural fault forests, catastrophic flooding will occur, how does its emphasis the importance of severely deforested areas such as the Philippines and industries where catastrophic flash flooding and landslides occur even during regular rainfall?

—VON BERNARDEZ,
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Paranoia in government?

IN ITS SEPT. 21 ISSUE, BY TIMOTHY ARGUELLES, Newsweek reports quoted a US FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) report—dated July 16, 2005—"the time ticked out for her administration, it was clear that the biggest problem was always herself, a 58-year-old, US-educated economist...Quoting 'those observers,' the report said Mrs. Arroyo had 'always exhibited paranoia and need to control every aspect of the Philippine economy and politics.'"

According to Wikipedia, "the free encyclopedia" (as he/she, "in popular culture, the term paranoia is usually used to describe excessive concern about one's own well-being, sometimes suggesting a person holds perspectives believes concerning a threat to themselves or their property and is often linked to a belief in conspiracy theories." Under the heading of "Examples of clinical paranoia," the encyclopedia mentions that "Many despotic rulers (for example, Stalin) allegedly suffered from paranoia...in Stalin's case, it is quite likely that many people really were out to get him...prompting the joke 'Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean that they're not out to get you.'"

In this the reason the administration claims that there is a conspiracy to assassinate the President, as alleged by Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago based on what somebody who was threatening some? Moreover, Senator Santiago accused Senate President Drilon and former President Gloria Arroyo of bribing the complainant.

Executive Order 464 is clearly intended to control the actions of Cabinet and other executive officials, as well as military and police officers, even beyond what is allowed by the Constitution. The additional prerequisite response to demonstrations is a policy to control supposed "persecutory" acts, even though the freedom of the people to assemble peaceably and petition the government for redress of grievances is guaranteed by the Constitution. Administration claims that the Senate is "out" to get the President through the use of its powers to investigate in aid of legislation may be based on a "paranoiacy" complex.

Is the administration aiming to wrongly against a people imagined to be attacking it? Was the OIS report, as quoted by PDI, right in saying that "history will see more Arroyo's prominence as a particularly good one for the Philippines?"

—RAMON E. ALMARIO,
ealmario@yahoo.com

Ours is not a hopeless society

IT'S INCREDIBLE TO SEE FILIPINOS hurting their fellow Filipinos during protest marches, some feeling compelled to do so by a sense of duty or by force of circumstance. History tells us how Filipinos fought for democracy in the past, many laying down their lives for the cause.

We, Filipinos, the rulers and the ruled, regardless of social status, seem united in our 1986s in the struggle to restore democracy in our country. Today, the struggle seems to have been watered by self-interests, political interests and the desire for grandstanding and has-been power.

In my view, this is why those in the government could quickly dismiss the sacrifices of the street marchers as part of a power grab conspiracy and selfish ambitions. And it's not that the media seem to have fallen into this mindset. And, maybe, this is also why other Filipinos have opted not to join the street protests though they are sympathetic to the protesters' cause.

I may be wrong, but I think the true side of Jose resides in our country better than in our neighbors, such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Burma, Sri Lanka and Cambodia.

I believe that ours is not yet a hopeless society; could see to what others would like to deride it, despite its weaknesses. There are still good public servants, we have our watchdog media, the still-caring religious leaders and others.

Time-tests states that we must learn to accommodate each other, admit our imperfections and work for the common good.

—DAVID B. REYES,
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Kowloon, Hong Kong

Across the NATION

P90-M bond scam surfaces in Clark

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—NOT ONLY has the Clark Development Corp. been hurt. It has also been given the run-around in its claim against the insurer of a bidder which almost bagged the privatization of the sprawling Mimosa Leisure Estate here, CDC officials on Thursday said.

And to ensure that it could not, last more than P90 million in damages and other fees, the CDC is suing the Filipino insurer of L. A. Campbell & Associates, one of the two bidders for the development of the 215-hectare prime estate, which submitted spurious documents in its bid to win the privatization project last year.

"We're calling on the bond," CDC executive vice president Victor Jose Lanzon told the business.

Lanzon said the "spurious and/or fictitious" submission by Campbell prejudiced the efforts of the government, through the state-owned CDC, to proceed with the privatization of the luxury property as a prime tourist and recreational destination in Central Luzon.

Another official, who declined to be named, said the case fuels the making of a bond scam, adding that the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel has endorsed the filing of the case in court.

In a 30-page suit, the CDC is seeking the forfeiture to it in favor of Campbell's P9,971,137.5 bid-day's bond issued by Prudential Guarantee & Assurance Inc. and over P20 million more in interests and legal fees.

The CDC determined from the refusal of Prudential Guarantee to pay CDC the bond despite repeated demands since June last year following a final declaration of failure of bidding of the Mimosa property. The bidding failure was prompted by findings that Campbell submitted "spurious and/or fictitious" documents in support's bid for the project.

CDC records show that early last year, Campbell and its partners D Corp-Sterity & Inov't Corp. and S T Global Services, submitted a sealed bid for the 25-year development, management and operation of the Hillsons leisure and its existing facilities.

The government-owned firm now Mimosa's operations after its former operator failed to pay lease worth at least P500 million in 1998.

But upon opening of the Dec 1 envelope in March last year, the proposed did not include the required bank certification that the amount of $25 million is earmarked for the privatization project.

The CDC declared a failure of bidding. Campbell appealed and was granted a decision allowing it to submit documents to show proof of availability of funds

INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Editor Joe Barcelona
Bureau Chief Florante G. Solmirano

Women victims find rainbow in shelter

A RESIDENT receives treatment for trauma through work at the center run by Good Shepherd Nuns. LEAH MENDOZA

By Joan Escandor Jr.
Naga City

GINAYS WOUNDED MAY HAVE already healed, but the pain of being repeatedly raped by her father a decade ago persists.

Her story has become more tragic after her mother blamed, condemned and punished her for what happened.

Gina (not her real name) ran away from home and was later referred to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. In turn, the agency recommended her to Good Shepherd nuns who provide temporary shelter and rehabilitation services for sexually abused girls and women in Naga City.

Since 22, Gina helps social workers and nuns manage newcomers at the Rahlim-dawani Integrated Institute for Girls and Women in Crisis or simply Rahlimdawani.

Rainbow

Rahlimdawani (archaic Bicol term for rainbow) has been giving hope for sexually abused girls and women since 1994. It has seven programs to rebuild their lives, combining spiritual nurturing with psychological, medical, educational, legal and therapeutic measures.

For more than a decade, it has been providing the women victims temporary shelter and therapy counseling and legal, educational and livelihood assistance. It has also been involved in women's advocacy work, network development, and alternative livelihood training.

The home can accommodate at least 35 residents, according to Sr. Mary Hope, its administrator. But she said the number of cases being referred to them has been consistently growing over year.

This year, Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi of the Archdiocese of Caceres, one of the prime movers of the program, volunteered to provide a shelter extension so that Rahlimdawani could accept more victims referred to them.

Sister Mary said the victims had no choice but to leave their homes and kneel once because the abusers still live with their families.

Seven of the 16 residents are girls, aged 3 to 10 years old, who are victims of incest. Incest totally destroys the trust of children on their loved ones who are supposedly their immediate protectors, according to Sr. Regina Fiel, a therapist.

Depression

The younger the victim, the deeper the psychological impact, which usually requires a longer healing process, Sister Regina said.

"There seems to be many more children, still undocumented or unreported, who suffer sexual abuses from the very persons they must trust," she said.

Sister Mary expressed alarm over the "very high" record of intrafamilial rape among the residents, even as she hoped that the trend did not show the true picture at the community level.

She said 81 of the 114 girls they had sheltered and cared for were abused sexually by relatives.

Poverty is a contributing factor for incestuous rape, the administrator added. Of the cases the center handled, the majority belonged to the poorest of the poor families. Sister Mary said no one came from middle class families.

HUGS running the center mingle with victims of abuse that took shelter in the Rahlimdawani. LEAH MENDOZA

Most of the victims live in one-room homes where privacy is a luxury. Sometimes, the mother would be out doing work as house help, street vendor or factory worker.

Some sexual abuse cases happened even when the women had just gotten birth and their partners were under the influence of liquor or drugs.

All the victims confessed to receiving threats to their lives from their tormentors, she said.

Of the 114 cases it has handled, the Rahlimdawani has facilitated the filing in court of 58. One offender received the death penalty, eight got life imprisonment, and one had a 17-year prison term.

Three have been acquitted for lack of evidence.

Moving on

Sr. Corazon Reis, a facilitator of the seven-period therapy services, expressed relief and fulfillment for former residents who have moved on.

One of them is now studying in a private school while her mother, who had confessed to being forced to serve as a sex slave by her common-law husband, her daughter's stepfather, graduated with a barrel and restaurant management degree and is now living independently with her daughter.

Rahlimdawani gave the mother education assistance after she decided to escape from her common-law husband and reported him to the authorities.

Another victim, Sister Corazon said, had graduated from an agricultural college with honors and had succeeded with a whole new life ahead of her.

Other residents have been reintegrated into their families as the relatives-offenders have been placed in the custody of authorities while awaiting for decisions on the cases filed against them before different courts, Sister Corazon added.

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Tiangco offers Navotas to MMDA after Montalban closes dump

By Nancy C. Carvajal and Edson C. Tinsay Jr.

TO HELP AVERT A POSSIBLE garbage crisis, Navotas is offering its Tanza dump for use by Metro Manila.

"I am open to the possibility of Metro Manila Development Authority's using the Tanza dump as substitute," said Mayor Toby Tiangco.

Tiangco made the offer after Rodriguez, Rizal Mayor Pedro Counio banned the MMDA from using the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility.

Counio clarified yesterday that the facility was only closed to garbage coming from Metro Manila. He said garbage from nearby towns like Cainta and Taytay generated in Montalban could still be dumped there.

"We have agreements with other towns not affected by our ordinance with the MMDA," he said.

Rodriguez previously ratified Montalban's ordinance making the MMDA to raise to P600 the current P400 per ton tipping fee for using its controlled garbage facility.

Counio said the agency also owes the town and the dump's private operator P385 million in unpaid fees.

Not getting any response from the MMDA, the mayor decided to stop accepting garbage from Metro Manila.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said garbage probably would have to be brought to the Navotas dump and the Payatas facility in Quezon City.

But the operation of the Navotas dump is having stiff opposition from fishermen from adjacent Dimasalang in Bulacan.

For six months now fishermen, claiming that the operation of the dump was polluting the river where they fish, had been barricading the Bonsueran River.

The river is being used by barges from a transfer station at the Binondo-Intramuros Bridge to bring garbage to the dump.

On Oct. 6, Judge Alexander F. Tamayo of Branch 15 of the Malolos Regional Trial Court issued a 20-day restraining order against the fishermen, allowing several barges to reach the dump.

However, Tiangco expects the barricade to resume with the expiration of a restraining order yesterday.

The mayor is hoping the court would eventually order the permanent removal of the barricade.

Anyway, he said, the barricade was illegal.

Tiangco pointed out that the controlled disposal facility, which is managed and run by Philippine Ecology Systems Corp., had a permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to operate until December 2005.

Tiangco said he had been asking the help of Olivarez officials to remove the barricade.

"But despite several communications with Mayor Jojitin Santiago... nothing happened," Tiang-co said.

With the closure of the Bagong dump and the probable end of the Tanza facility, Tiangco is hopeful that the MMDA would compel Olivarez officials to act.

"Maybe the national government would come in and implement the law," Tiangco said.

Urban poor to bring Christmas to life

VOLUNTEERS-HOUSEWIVES of Crisostomo Street in Pasig, Manila, glue colored paper and shiny sequins on empty soap/cooking bottles, which will be used to adorn a lechiga on UN Avenue.

By Tina G. Santos

MITSUBISHI MAKING THINGS EASY. United Nations Avenue in Manila will soon be enchanted with a blinking display of light and color while creating the illusion as they do it.

Celebrating Christmas in a way that is uniquely Filipino, a group of urban poor folk is fashioning extensive decorations that will be used to adorn the 15-meter long bridge.

The project, dubbed as "bridge of hope," aims to bring life to one of the oldest landmarks in the city. It is a joint effort of Unilever Philippines and its neighbor, Barangay Crisostomo.

"We also intend to showcase the creativity of Filipinos and bring a message of hope and unity to the midst of these trying times," said Marlene Gomez, the project's executive producer.

"There is no better time to do it than now. This is a challenge we pose to everyone—let us all be united in cheering to the whole world that Christmas is still very much alive amidst all the hardships," she added.

About 30 housewives worked on empty egg-shaped bottles of mayonnaise and ordinal three to six-liquid jars of soy.

Using colored cartolina, soft paper, glitter and sequins, the women transformed the jars into funky containers with enhanced Christmas designs.

"The bridge needs a lot of room for creativity," Gomez said, adding that the community hopes to produce several hundreds of decorated bottles to provide the bridge with adequate lighting.

A shower of stars

Apart from the decorated bottles, thousands of bottle lights are also expected to dock the bridge, creating a dazzling illusion of shining through a shower of stars.

Gomez said the project tapped the community's hyperactive spirit.

"We encouraged the community to come and work together. The women were in charge of decorating the bottles, while the men will come in later to put up the structures," she said.

The Ilihan, a barangay legend who was among those who joined the activity, said the project helped boost the morale of the residents.

"It gives us a feeling that there is still hope and that the spirit of Christmas is very much alive. We're happy that in our little way we still definitely would like to celebrate the holidays," she said in Filipino.

Juanita Sauzgado, 41, said the project helped her alleviate her patients' skills.

"Hapo ito pala. Akala ko di ako marunong. Dapolog kasalanan ako na ako," she said.

Most of the housewives, however, expressed hope that the organizers would consider turning the project into a livelihood activity.

The "mall," some of them added, could also be a big family activity with children as participants.

"The most important thing is you have fun. As long as your home has, you can't go wrong," Sheryl Pollo, 34, said.

Metro crime down, says NCRPO report

By Jocelyn R. Uy

JOSEPH'S THE EASO TIMES, THE National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said yesterday that the crime rate in Metro Manila went down 13.9 percent from July 2004 to this July.

In the 11-month period, crime volume in the metropolis dipped to 17,132 reported incidents from the previous year's 19,922, said a report from NCRPO chief Director Victor Deona. He said the recently concluded Command Inspection/Operational Readiness Security Inspection Test and Evaluation or Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City.

Of the total reported incidents, Deona said the NCRPO solved 14,878 cases for a 93.74 percent crime solution efficiency.

Moreover, Deona reported that several crime groups were neutralized from September 2004 to third 2005. These included the Aun-Aun Wo-ya Wong group, Apap robbery group, Dipsy Gang and Mikmik Bahala Na Gang, also known as the Eat-Bulaga Gang.

During the same period, eight kidnapping cases were solved and 13 kidnappers were arrested, including former National Bureau of Investigation agent Manuel Soriano, and the Sergeant Pedro Commander Bolantes Division.

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Beware of 'NBI agents' inspecting your PCs

By Marginia C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INvestigation (NBI) has warned the public against a group of people posing as bureau agents who sell private homes for unlicensed software.

"We have received reports that since the Anti-Piracy Team started its grass-period for users to buy authorized computer programs before they start conducting operations against those engaged in the illegal selling and distribution of software, unscrupulous individuals had been taking advantage of the situation to prey against illegal software," NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division chief Jose Jaime Ong said.

In circulating a wad, version of the new modus operandi said a group of men would introduce themselves as NBI agents and ask businessmen or house help if they have about the bureau's anti-piracy campaign. The "NBI agents" then dedicated to be of a trusted insider, the house help can't "suspect" the victim's personal computers.

Meanwhile, the Filipinas Anti-Piracy Team, a software piracy task force composed of the Optical Media Board (OMB), the Philippine National Police and the NBI announced yesterday that it confiscated some P103 million worth of pirated software and disc replicating machines during operations began last month.

The DKR has also started to deputize regional and city board computer teams to boost its nationwide campaign. With Sarwa E Quiramando

Metro Briefs

Not a safe refuge

POLICE SEIZE 50 Cotabato in Maguindanao had been his home for years until police came to pick up Cesar Cargay, Pasay City's 6th most wanted person, on Tuesday. Cargay was accused of killing a neighbor more than two years ago. An informant directed police to the suspect's refuge at the cemetery where he had been a caretaker for four years. Jocelyn R. Uy

Open for business

BIRAO, P'ang days after opening a drive for existing competition regulations, Pasay City Mayor Ricardo Eusebio effected a Universal Robina Corporation coffee plant to resume operations. The plant was closed for 15 days to reopen temporarily pending its compliance with antipollution standards. Oliver C. Santos Jr.

Healing confab

THE PHILIPPINE College for the Advancement of Medicine will host the 4th National Conference on Alternative and Natural Medicine from Nov. 13-16 at the Subic International Resort. Interested parties may call 911-6948 and 371-4850.

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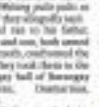
Another drug 'planting' case



ON TARGET: Kennedy Dalit's a fight with Edsel Cagatin, son of SPO4 Edgar Cagatin, over a petty matter.

EDDY DAY, SCORES OF innocent citizens get hauled on drug charges by policemen despite a new law that metes out the death sentence to cops who "plant" drugs.

Just the 10th time, my "kumbong-an kay Tatay" affair received Tuesday a complaint that a member of a special anti-drug task force "planted" marijuana leaves inside [sinibol] on two young men.

I told this story, my "kumbong" reporter, in the special anti-drug task force in Bicutan, Taguig, to check the report and to interview the alleged victims of the same cop, Michael Nuevo, 36, and Rogelio Rubio, 26, both construction workers.

Mic and her sources were Bay Pamplona, and self-styled detained for illegally detaining in a police station. They were only released after I called up Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes and National Police chief Arturo Lomibao.

Here's what Mic found out:

Michael and Rogelio had a fight with Edsel Cagatin, son of SPO4 Edgar Cagatin, over a petty matter.

Incident, if memorie "temperature" (children's quarrel) although Michael, Rogelio and Edsel are no longer children.

Rogelio and Michael's fault was to tell Edsel they were not scared of his father. "Wala ang pakialam sa amin," they allegedly said.

Edsel left to tell his father. Father and son, both armed to the teeth, confronted the two. They took them to the barangay hall of Barangay Pulpitan, Dasmariñas, Cavite.

SPO1 Cagatin asked the barangay chief if he could bring the men on his head quarters in Manila and have their underpa-s drug test. The barangay captain, who didn't know the law, allowed the cop to get hold of Michael and Rogelio.

There was nothing in the barangay blotter about drugs being found on Michael and Rogelio who were both wearing basketball shorts.

But, alas and alack! When the two were turned over to the Regional Anti-Illegal Drug Special Operations Task Force (that's the official name of the agency), drugs turned inside down for Michael and Rogelio.

SPO1 Cagatin charged them with drug pushing and presented sachets of shabu that he said were found on their persons.

Supt. Jerry Bolcruan, Cagatin's chief, backed up his subordinate, saying Michael and Rogelio's arrest and detention were legal.

Worse, she ordered Bambong's Alex Perez and Bay Pamplona detained for inquiring after Michael and Rogelio.

I chortled with Camp Crame's personnel records about Bolcruan, whose name rang a bell. This guy was dismissed from the police service on Dec. 23, 1997 for car theft, extortion and illegal possession of firearms.

My Camp Crame sources said Bolcruan was allegedly able to get back in after the influential Iglesia ni Cristo, to which religious sect he belongs, pulled some strings with police bigwigs.

Was it any wonder then that Bolcruan would come to the defense of Cagatin and have my many mailmen accused?

While Mic and Bay were being detained by Superintendent Bolcruan, 7 called Director Victor Deona, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), Bolcruan's big boss, to seek his help.

Deona said he would back Bolcruan because he was "an honest officer," having turned down a P500,000 bribe offer of an arrested drug pusher.

Aarghh!

You still wonder why the PNP hauled is full of bad eggs?

They are being coddled by their superiors.

Taguig: South Metro's new Divisoria?

By Jocelyn R. Uy

TAGUIG CITY COULD OFFER STIFF COMPETITION to Manila's famed Divisoria market.

The local government has reserved a space in the city's public market for hawkers from the provinces for sale to customers at cheaper prices, much like the popular destination for shoppers in Manila's Tondo and Binondo districts.

The move is part of the local government's project "Food Security and Poverty Alleviation Program" aimed at providing consumers in Taguig and neighboring towns with high-quality products at low prices.

A joint project of the city's Cooperative Development Office (CDO) and local government units (LGUs) from Rizal's Tanay, Pateros and North Cotabato, the program would also enhance the marketability of livestock and agricultural crops produced by farmers from the provinces.

"We feel this is a win-win situation for everyone involved. Farmers would have a ready market for their goods at a set price, while consumers would be assured of the lowest possible prices," Mayor Freddie Tinga said in a statement.

Taguig public information officer Ana Santos said the farmers would benefit from this step from the venture as they would be able to reach more customers at the least cost.

Farmers/LGUs will deliver their products to the public market in Barangay Lower Bicutan while the city government, in coordination with non-government organizations, will distribute these products to other public markets in the city. The project would also eliminate the role of middle players who frequently exploit the prices of basic commodities, according to Freddie Tapiru, Taguig CDO head.

Consumers now are highly dependent on the traditional markets in Divisoria, Marikina and Balintawak, Quezon City, for low-priced products, he noted.

FERNANDEZ

The scene was for real, not reel

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.
and Raquel San Diego Jr.

ACTION STAR RUBY FERNANDEZ ALLEGEDLY punched him and—one poked a .45-caliber handgun to his head. But complainant Ruben Tarroza, 34, was not talking about a movie scene.

Tarroza, a consultant of the Viva Entertainment Group, alleged that Fernandez attacked him inside his office the other night. "He punched me several times. Then he poked his gun at me. He also physical whipped me, hitting my nape and head," Tarroza said in a complaint filed yesterday in the Eastern Police District Senior Investigation in Pasig City.

Tarroza allegedly incurred Fernandez' wrath after he and his former wife, actress Alma Moreno, their children and several others were deported from Japan last Friday.

Tarroza said he was talking to talent manager Zenaida Reyes in the Viva Restomain movie Office on Tektite Tower, Ortigas, on Tuesday when Fernandez arrived with two men. The actor asked him if he was "Bobby" and if he knew Fernandez. When he said yes, Tarroza said the actor began hitting him.

Fernandez later drew a gun and aimed it at Tarroza's head. "Gusto mo bang mamatay? (Do you want to die?)," the actor allegedly told the Viva consultant who claimed that Fernandez also hit him on the head with his gun. Security guards arrived later and pacified the actor.

Talent manager Lolit Solis, speaking in behalf of the actor, said Reyes told her that Fernandez had been "sleepless and had nightmares" since the deportation incidents. "He has been depressed," Solis said. "They were detained in a dingy room from 7 a.m. to 4 a.m. But more than the embarrassment, he was upset because of the alleged inhumane treatment. Id, his two children, nine-year-old Victoria Joy and four-year-old Iliff, got in Japan. They were reportedly not given food throughout their detention."

Solis confirmed they had a meeting with Tarroza and other Viva executives at the company's office on the day of the incidents. In that meeting, Tarroza was reportedly asked by the group about a letter he had reportedly faxed to the Japanese Embassy that got the actor and company in trouble in Tokyo.

Viva said it was not taking sides on the issue. "We just want to set the record straight," said Viva legal counsel Criss Lopez. "The company has never caused the deportation of any of its artists. That is carried on her own."

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DLSU probe tags Salgado, Lacson

By Jasmine Vi Payo

CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, THE ELIgibility scrutinized what reached De La Salle to the UAAP to bar Bonn anew.

Now as La Salle-implicated Junior officer Bad Nieva? Lacson and assistant team manager Manny Salgado in the team officials who helped secure the false eligibility documents of two Green Archers, La Salle president Bro. Armin Luistro FSC said these findings are just the "initial part of the investigation" and the four-man committee tasked to handle the case will continue its probe.

The university also officially named the two players as center Mark Lester Bautista and point guard Frederick Ramirez, JR, who both retired up in the decision "Zero Grade" in the ruling.

"The information released were the only ones verifiable," said Luistro during a press conference held at the Open Court yesterday. "There are many other allegations being floated, but from the initial hearing, this is only in the admissions stated in this case without breaking the bounds of justice."

"This isn't to say that we're done," added executive vice president Dr. Carmelita Quebengco. "There is so much to do including continued talks with the persons named in the investigation. The succeeding action will depend on the outcome of our talks with them."

According to the report of the four-man fact-finding committee, Bautista and Garibaldo both said Lacson secured their Philippine Educational Placement Test Certificate of Rating (PEPTCR) from the Department of Education.

Lacson allegedly told Bautista "that someone would take the test for him," while Garibaldo also identified the unidentified individual as "having given the questions (PEPTCR) to someone."

The report, which outlines subsequent to the UAAP hoard, also identified Salgado as "possibly the other person with prior knowledge" of the fake documents.

"They mentioned that (Salgado) stands a call to Mark Nieves, saying that the PEP certificate is ready," said Quebengco of the aforementioned team official, who was banned for life in the UAAP after assaulting the Eastern U ace Arnulfo Sarmo following the Total Clutch 3 win over the Archers in the storied 2005 Finals series.

The report noted, however, that both Lacson and Salgado denied "first hand personal knowledge or direct knowledge about the questioned documents."

"From people (Lacson and Salgado) are connected," said Quebengco. "We are confident that we'll all since La Salle employees is involved."

The report also said "no other La Salle official was tagged by affidavit mentioned."

The PEPTCR is an exam taken in lieu of a high school diploma to be eligible for college.

Bautista and Garibaldo had been properly sanctioned according to Quebengco.

"The moment we got the certification from DepEd that they submitted false documents... we told them that they would not get any credits from any course taken or passed in the university," she said. "That is itself is the sanction."

Luistro added that La Salle recognizes that the two players "may have some responsibility over these accusations" but the university understands their "vulnerability given their age and sincere desire" to be part of the basketball team.

The two La Salle officials added that they're willing to assist both cagers in completing their high school studies.

Luistro also proposed talks of a revamp in the entire basketball program.

"We're trying to be careful of what we have to change precisely because we don't want to go the other extreme of being reactionary," he said. "To come up with a whole new sports development program in this stage may not be wise.

"Certainly there will be some overhaul but I do not want to say what it would be at this stage because I think we needed some time and to get (the) input (some of which) direction we should go."

The school officials also stressed that there was no "deliberate attempt to withhold information."

Although La Salle received a certification letter from DepEd on Aug. 10, the start of the UAAP season, Quebengco said "it was deemed inconsequential only the matter from DepEd in order to exclude any possible error of ineligibility."

La Salle dismissed Garibaldo after 2 hr., however, aside the above during the press conference when he surprisingly lambasted the university officials "as the biggest hypocrite La Salle has ever produced."

"How could they fulfill the government requirement pass the La Salle exam?" asked Orlo Ortiz, adding that all La Salle alumni have "become the butt of jokes" as a result of the controversy.

Luistro assured the 20-year-old diatribe, who crashed the press conference, that the incident doesn't imply that La Salle has "lowered its standards" and the scandal "won't happen again."

Quebengco assured that "different programs have different requirements" and both players "met the requirements of the BS Sports Management course."

Mikee RP flag-bearer

BOXER MERVIE GARCIGOCO, 18, recently, who decided to come out of retirement several days ago, was named as the Philippines' flag-bearer during the opening of the 22nd Southeast Asian Games.

The Philippine Olympic Committee's executive committee also chose Athens Olympic hopefuls Mary Antoinette Rivera to light the SEAG flame during the opening, which is expected to draw a crowd of no less than 250,000 at the Quezon on Nov. 27.

• • •

ALL equipment to be used for the Games have arrived and need only be cleared from customs before they are released to the National Sports Association concerned.

The ban to be shipped are the polypropylene gauntlets and elastomeric dumbbells to be used for the Metal Memorial track and field event and the boots for runner kayak. Manong R. Castillo

Ozamiz snares NBC nat'l title

OZAMIZ CITY—MAYOR REYNALDO Parubrago Crumby Cetra Divine organ got huge double-double numbers from Billy Sinad and ex-pro Christian Stolen to host the Kamote Invitational Cocktail Carrier, 78-73, Tuesday and capture the 2005 Phoenix-NBC national basketball title before an overflowing crowd at the Ozamiz Angel Medina Jr. gym.

Sinad supervised with 26 on top of 14 rebounds and Nicolas, who was unanimously named tournament MVP, recorded 17 points and 12 boards as Ozamiz led from start to finish to reach their first championship in Cavite in four years.

Ozamiz had previously lost to Cavite twice at home during the tourney organized by Simonetti, Salpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Seatrek Sports Drink, Acool, Molino, Nissan's Spring, the Kasser Insurance, Skaga, Gelbo, Hyper Toothpaste, Dentbasic, IOS Food Products (Soy Sauce), Prime Channel, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza Cebu.

"It's sweet to win at home. We're emotional, overwhelmed with the victory and the Ozamiz people's support," said coach Albert Cabra.

The Invasion of Baroon Tito Mayor Infante Mabini and strong supporter Gen. Emeric "Boring" Mallini converted only four of 27 3-point shots, with nuts won Marcelo Goldpenser finishing with only 11 points and five rebounds.

NBC president Nathaniel "Tan" Padilla failed to make the awarding ceremony due to business commitments but his secretary general, Tito Pharm, expressed satisfaction at the league's successful run to its second season.

Nicolas was joined in the All-Tilapia Five by Grotjeuves, Telus Gagbo's Ronald Baraas, Valencia's Hot Cross and Miguel Alberto Sigardo.

Other awardees were Valencia's Gingerd Amarach in support of the Brat, Tribu's Ramiro Almacin, most improved player and Salvacio mentor Arnie Bautista, coach of the year.

Ozamiz
GAME 14—Sinad 26, Nicolas 17, Sangi 13, Alberto 11, Zaragoza 7, Sarcado 7, Delosa 2, Ignacio 2, Ramos 0, Ramirez 0, Cabrera 0.
QUIT 12—Bac 32, Rodriguez 18, Ignacio 11, Cornelio 8, Ocampo 8, Gamez 8, Fernandez 8, Ibrahim 0, Mamaradlo 0, Zaldarriaga 0.
Stanton 25-50 20-41 (.500 .51) 10-15 (.667) 12-39 (.308) 73.

NBC secretary general Tito Palma presents the trophy to Ozamiz City Mayor Reynaldo Parubrago. With them are city administrator Mike Ortanez, coach Albert Cabra, players and supporters.

FOOTBALL FESTIVAL: Mariel School and Xavier School teams tangle in the Red Ribbon PEP-MIL Football Festival recently at the Colegio San Agustin grounds in Bacmanihan Village, Makati City.

Giants rip Tigers

By Jose Navarro

JONDAN Salvador continued to stand tall on a Parefoods Chunkee Giant.

The year's fourth overall draft pick shot a career-high 21 points and grabbed nine rebounds last night, sparking the Giants to a 120-97 win over the Coca-Cola Tigers in the San Miq Coffee-PBA Pinoy Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Salvador, who had an almost impeccable 13-of-15 shooting, also had six Pesti, Coca-Cola's chief gunner, nowhere, in the final half.

"Scoring point was just a bonus," said Salvador, a former PBL-MVP while playing for Mariveles Jewels in the summers. "Containing Ali (Pesti) was my main target and I'm relieved to get the work done."

Marquis Chandler won his matchup against Coke's Omar Thomas, scoring 25 points and grabbing 15 rebounds while Bobby Raymundo's 20 numbers were a point shy of his personal-high. But Raymundo's diva dished off six assists on top of four rebounds and two blocks.

But they were all overdrawn by Salvador, who threw glowing praise from coach Ryan Gregorio.

"It's not hard to pick him as No. 4 (in the draft) because I feel he could deliver the goods," said Gregorio of his 6-foot-4 power forward.

With their fifth victory in six games, the Giants have now duplicated their 3-1 start to the 2000 Governors Cup.

Thomas came up with 16 points, 14 rebounds, three assists and three steals for the Tigers, who slid to 1-4.

Ramirez Garden celebrated the return of Tim Monk with a 130-91 victory over Talk 'N Text in the second game.

Monk, playing his first game after a six-month absence, fired 17 points and grabbed eight rebounds as the Elegs improved to 3-1. The Phone Pals turned their first loss in five games.

The scores:
First Game
PARE GIANTS (82)—Chandler 27, Raymundo 20, Salvador 19, Yap 5, Ni. Ilo 5, Ilo 5, Milanes 4, Gonzalez 4, Arnaldo 2, Pogoy 0, Ibarra 0, Castillo 0.
COCA-COLA (97)—Thomas 30, Manuel 16, Pesti 15, Argel 8, Mariano 7, Antonio 7, Ramirez 4, Alonzo 3, Simon 2, Wilson 0, Jones 0.
Stanton: 38-57 (.667) 28-71 (.394) 30-40 (.750) 16-49 (.327) 120.

Muntinlupa leads MYG invt'l

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MUNTINLUPA ASSERTED ITS SUPremacy in football by picking up two more golds to take the early overall lead in the first Manila Youth Games national invitational yesterday.

The tourney host southern Metro Manila added the boys' 12-under and girls' 12-under championships to the boys' 17-under and girls' 15-under titles they secured yesterday to pave the field with four golds.

Paranaque and Laguna Province won the other two titles disputed in football event at Quezon City Integrated Sports Complex.

Muntinlupa finished on the spiky-ski performance of MVP Christine del Carmen to defeat Mandaluyong, 5-3, in the girls' 17-under title match. Laguna Province struck through a 5-0 win over Bohol in the boys' 15-under.

Meanwhile, the runner of the UP varsity trains the QC dragger won the bench of three playoffs for the softball crown, 2 games to 1, following a 5-2 win over the Adamson-backed Manila crowers in their rubber match.

QC won Game 1 (11-0) of the title series before Manila fought back with a 2-1 triumph through the heroics of pitcher Charlie Mejia a.

Three Manilla is expected to make some starting today when track and field starts at the UST football field.

The Games, organized by the Manila Sports Council, also features competitions in baseball, tennis, swimming and athletics.

Tennessee City continued its winning ways in the 12-under Little League baseball, whipping Bohol, 14-0, in their 4-title three-down against 10-united rules today.

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Magnolia vs Granny Saturday

A PAIR OF EXPLOSIVE MEETINGS will highlight the inaugurals of the 2008 PBL Heroes Cup on Saturday as two of the league's giants—Magnolia Dairy Ice Cream and Ginebra Gin (formerly Welcoat Paints)—finally open their campaigns with the big guns in the circle of champions.

The Hotshots, buttressed by back-to-back Unity MVP Arnold Intolos and PBA-bet Willy Williams, collide with Granny Goose Syrellen in the opener at 2 p.m., while the Kings' Purefoods clash with the Tuna-Ota Delights at 4 p.m.

Opening ceremonies start at 1 p.m. with Olympian archer Jasmine Figueroa hoisted as special guest.

Tony solons Jun Bautista and Ariel Pobletan-led Solid Gold will provide dance numbers to spice up the affair which will be shown live over Studio 23.

"Everything is set for the opening of the Heroes Cup and just like in the past outings of the tournament, we expect another fierce but exciting encounter in the quarterfinals," said commissioner Chito Trinidad, who is also seated with the returns of Japan-Philippine Christian University-to-the league, now in its 34th season.

The Lamayan franchise is half-assured of the spot of the PCU Dolphins of the NCAA.

Thomas came up with 16 points, 14 rebounds, three assists and three steals for the Tigers, who slid to 1-4.

Ramirez Garden celebrated the return of Tim Monk with a 130-91 victory over Talk 'N Text in the second game.

Monk, playing his first game after a six-month absence, fired 17 points and grabbed eight rebounds as the Elegs improved to 3-1. The Phone Pals turned their first loss in five games.

The scores:
First Game
PARE GIANTS (82)—Chandler 27, Raymundo 20, Salvador 19, Yap 5, Ni. Ilo 5, Ilo 5, Milanes 4, Gonzalez 4, Arnaldo 2, Pogoy 0, Ibarra 0, Castillo 0.
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Stanton: 38-57 (.667) 28-71 (.394) 30-40 (.750) 16-49 (.327) 120.

SPORTSWATCH

Hot Freaky Nights on All Saints' Day

SIMULACRUM SETTLE NOW "SPOT WHEN THE HOT FREAKY NIGHTS FLIP! From Oct. 29 to 31 at the PSA Promenade, Mandaluyong Blvd. in Pinoy City. Eat and sip like crazy, shoes and masks, plus scream a bloody balloon for the country's hottest bands and performers will highlight the event, which is organized by Greenlight Productions, headed by CEO Joyce Pando and consultant Jomar Rosales. The event will start with the 10K-or-1K-walking-costume-run of Oct. 31, opening the last three on Oct. 28. At 1 p.m., drag-racing session before the big night starts gets its base kit on. Sponsored by Real Estate Ben Chilaw, Philippine Charity Commission's Miss Robert James, Promiser, Acoustic Versus, a Go Baby Mix, Kasser Studio, Crescent Dot, Western Guard and Sony Cuplard. All Freaky Nights will end just before the "Last Scare Standing," but full details on the Freaky Friends' activities and their results pack up the distinctive name and preferences of our racing enthusiasts. In the course of the event, spectators and participants will become so bewildered by the Halloween Costume Party on the Saints' Day.

SERG DREW: Mila sports executive Pit Ilee-ong (left) presents commissioner Mike Cea (a Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee chair) Jose Cajayorgo recently. Mila is the official energy drink of the 22nd SEA Games.

2nd Annual Stag meet today

THE 2ND ANNUAL STAG DERBY FEATURING TWO 5-STAG COMPETITIONS WILL start today at the Sun Valley Cockpit, Pasig. The two-day event, staged by the United Stag(ed) Breeders Association and backed by Thunderbird Inventure, will parade over 400 competing gamefowls and farmers from all over the country and are set to wager at P10,000. Another 6-stag event will be held today at the Master Breeder Dr. Eduardo Darbo in Lazo-Lapaz City with a P5 million guaranteed cash prize. Million-peso specials at Sun Village Cockpit in Cagayan, on Saturday, as members of the Cagayan Valley Gamefowl Breeders Association settle in a special 6-stag tussle sponsored by Thunderbird Stag Developer.

10 fights in NCA derby finals

DOUBLE-HEADED MOONGOD GAN DOUBLE MOVE, THEIR 1ST RIGHT IS TONIGHT when the championship round of the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-stag derby wages at the Makati Coliseum. And at 2:00 sharp, 20 cocks will be the maximum round total featuring eight Derby hosts and Representatives Gerry Espinosa and Angelo Reyes. In a contest shortened from the #5 / Sports and Amusement Corp. announced that the NCA Grand National Championship 8-stag derby is moved to Nov. 13, 10 and 14. Meanwhile, the semis and final leg will START a staggering variation episodes on Saturday. Persons can buy their tickets on a "buy now, take now" promo. Contact 886-3000 and 886-8495.

Cavite Int'l Derby gets support

THE 16TH EDITION OF THE CAVITE INTERNATIONAL DERBY SLATED Nov. 20 this, 1 and 2, gets a big boost recently with the participation of prominent cockers abroad. The event, to be hosted by Senator Sen. Ramon Revilla, Jaime Yulo Zobel, Lito Atienza, Jose Antonio Sarmiento and Wilfredo Gil, will be staged at the Cavite Coliseum Derby Center and Casino. Awaiting the list of foreign participants are Rep. Benjamin Gabriel of Taiwan, three Associate of Tennessee, Conrad Burgos of California, Paulo Gatchalian of Japan, Li Ong of Malaysia in partnership with Primalloy Brothers and Thomas Mahaber of Germany. For reservation of cockhouses, call 0975-1234567 or 0918-5748901 (look for Isabelle or Brandy). For an entry of P150,000, the guaranteed prize is P5 million.

TJGL tilt at Valley

THE FOURTH ANNUAL GOLF tournament of The Junior Golfers League (TJGL) will be held this Sunday, Oct. 30 on the executive course of the Valley Golf and Country Club in Antipolo.

Angeleno Inc.'s Val, player role Ariel marshalled local and international events will be competing in five age brackets while parents and guests will be seeing action in a separate division.

TJGL-top guns Gershon dela Fe, Cyan Rodriguez, Mariel Pineda, Frankie Isidro, Andre Uneon and Simon Tong are returning with Crystal and Princess Espinosa, Miguel Moreno, Blue dela Fe, Abigail and Tomas Arevalo, Jacelle Ibon and Fidela Medalla.

Specially-designed trophies by Trophies and awesome raffle items are up for grabs. Major sponsors of TJGL are New Bonbon Construction, Inc., Apo Prime Steel, MS Technology, GMA 99 Sterling, Glitech, Mindy Bisnes, 881 CD, Bebot Bebot and AFM Trustfund. Silver sponsors are Delta Ice Corp., Rebisco Inter, Monteritz, Goodrich, Goodfind Corp., Desmed Dynamic, Inc., International Beach, Smiley Tech (MPM), Pandapost Technology Solution Co., Ltd., Crown Chem, Shanda Properties, Inc., Jacqui Gobby Hilarok, Marlou Pang, Reddi-Commercial Bank, Mr & Ms. Ely Rodriguez, Garland, Mr. & Ms. Jose Tamarion, Reynaldo Capistrano, Noel Villanueva and Others.

For inquiries, call 631 7669/5731.

HOUSTON Astros Chicago White Sox pitcher Chris Widger (L) and pitcher Mark Buehrle celebrate after defeating the Houston Astros 7-0 in Game 3 of Major League Baseball's 2005 World Series in Houston, Texas, Oct. 25, 2005. The White Sox lead the best-of-seven series three games to none. REUTERS/Mike Blake

14-INNING THRILLER

White Sox near title on Blum home run

HOUSTON, TEXAS—(UCPF) Shea Hillenbrand's two-out, solo home run in the 14th inning to the Chicago White Sox beat the Houston Astros 6-5 on Tuesday in the longest game in World Series history.

Hillenbrand's 164-foot towering shot off Astros reliever Ezequiel Astacio sailed over the right field fence to put the White Sox on the verge of winning their first World Series title in 46 years.

Chicago owned a 3-0 lead in Major League baseball's best-of-seven championship final but the White Sox had to come from behind in the marathon game, which lasted five hours, 41 minutes.

The White Sox can sweep up the full Classic with a victory in game four late on Wednesday and complete a sweep of the Series, competing in the first World Series in the 44-year history of their franchise.

The White Sox fell behind early on Tuesday. Chris Burke in a two-run 10th inning, got some clutch hitting in the eighth and survived a bases-loaded scare in the ninth.

Jubilant Illinis, who is the nearest White Sox having been acquired at the July 31 trading deadline, made the most of his only at-bat of the season.

The New York Mets and New York Yankees set the previous record length for a World Series game by nine at bat hours, 51 minutes in 2000.

The epic contest also equalled the Chicago-Houston World Series games by innings, matching the '54 visiting game between Boston and Brooklyn in 1916.

Astros starter Roy Oswalt pitched six innings, giving up eight hits and five runs with six walking five batters. Before the White Sox's five-run fifth, Oswalt had allowed just five runs in 25 post-season innings.

Jon Garland started for Chicago and left after seven innings, surrendering seven hits and four runs. AFP

Big firms back Nasac Golf

HERE ARE FIRMS HAVE COMMITTED to support the second Nasac Grand Slam Golf Cup tournament on Nov. 4 at the Canlubang Automobile course in Quezon City. These are TMS Hydropiping, Haguet Lumberjack, Manila Development Marina Pond, Hing Ring, North Luzon Refineries Corp., Diamond and Mondelez Batteries, PCSO, Guerrero & C. Lazaro Fiber and Fishery Arts, Proceeds from the 18-hole golfest will help fund the Nasacians Heart Rescue Council's 18th Triumphal Congress slated in February 2006. Nasac chair Pepsy Aviso said a big turnout of golfers is expected. Interest: 486-8745 and 332-9493.

Ortillo clinches Eagle Ridge crown

JOEL ORTILLO CAME THROUGH with a cut 10-under par 62 to win the Class A crown in the seven mandatory monthly tournament of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Ortillo's tournament low grew at the Mountain course event. He finished six under par 71 with a birdie on the 18th hole. Ortillo's one-stroke victory over Patrick Medina placed third with a 74. Rookie amateur Pablo Mendiola by a score stroke ahead of Mel Ignacio.

Amateur Edgar Antonio Jr. in Class C with his 65. Edgar Antonio shared third spot with Medina.

Sanders and Tayao were the senior division champions. Sanders scored a 36-hole total of 76 while Tayao (Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr.) finished two strokes off the pace with a 78.

In the Veteran event, Gonzales topped Ernesto Sanchez, Sr. by one stroke, 74 to 75. Sanchez edged Jose Sanchez, Jr. by a stroke for third place.

Euro boxers to face Pinoy SEAG bets

By Dennis G. Eros
Inquirer Libre sports editor

THE GOLDEN BOXING GIRLS TO THE 23rd Southeast Asian Games will be tested when they trade punches with European fighters using the Philippines as the final stop in their buildup for the 2005 world championship set Nov. 5-13 in China.

The visiting boxers, three members in this year's Athens Olympics and last year's world championships, will display their wares in the three-day Bank Mobile Go for Gold program hosted by the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines starting on Nov. 3.

Chairman and executive director of the ABAP, Tommy Manotoc, announced the initial cast of European boxers along with Olympic bronze medalists Rukiaxon Hamidovic of Germany Alexander Lopez and Mandy Bujold of Canada.

Lopez said the Abap is still finalizing the roster of the Philippines in the three-day PSC Go for Gold Cup will be held in Dagupan City on Nov. 5, La Union City on Nov. 7 and La Trinidad, Benguet on Nov. 9.

The Philippines is determined to bounce back from a disappointing one-gold, seven-silver performance in the 2003 SEAG in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City.

Thailand won the overall crown with seven golds and 11 bringing in overall domination, including Athens Olympic gold medal winner light welterweight Manus Boonjumnong, reigning Global champ Apostolo Cruz, reigning Oriental champ Rey Saludar, reigning Pacific champ Rey Loreto and Olympian Mark Ramos.

INTERVIEW. Cebuano Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino interviews Tagaytay Tots member Ino Carmencita Nuneza at the opening of the 2005 National Inter-Cities and Municipalities cheerleaders championships held Monday at the Tagaytay Sports Center in Tagaytay City. Planning are National Cheer Federation of the Philippines secretary general Sunney Eunice, Grandmasters Helen Mariano II and Joey Antonio and project director Willie Alcaba.

Alabang salvages draw

UNDERSHOOTER KILLION Mariano (1 hour intermission) and Manuel Michael Brooks to rescue Alabang Elementalope City from the brink of defeat in the fifth round of the 2005 Inter-Cities and Municipalities Chess Team Championships at the Tagaytay Sports Center in Tagaytay City.

Mariano's heroics allowed the defending team champion to salvage a draw against Tanauan City 2-2, 300 minutes after beginning in the week-long tournament with 45-minute points.

Batangas City stunned Manila, 3-1, to claim second spot with 16 points. City of Isabela, Cagayan Province, Ilocos Sur and Cebu City rounded out the top six.

National Master Rolando Nelle, Christopher Castellano and Arlon Buenaseda of Batangas won their three games to contribute to put to rest the victory of Manila's Bibiano Quintano Leido against IM Ronald Bancod on the top board.

Tagaytay "B" and Tagaytay "A" also won their respective matches to share fourth spot with Castellano at 3-1 and stay in the hunt for the US$6,000 top prize.

FOOTBALL draw. Prime movers of the ongoing PFF-Adidas U-19 National Championship during the draw. Standing from left are Dominko Garramendi (PFF acting Executive) and Pete Aranaz (tournament commissioner). Seating from left are Ashley Goody Cuzzolin, managing director John Manno and PFF president Johnny Romualdez.

Davelets start bid with win

EL PASO, Texas—Davao Aguilas came through with a resounding victory to jump start its campaign for a ninth straight high school title in the Filipino Basketball League Collegiate and Universities Athletic Association (SUAA) basketball competitions at the Colegio San Agustin-Bacolod gym.

The Davelets opened their championship series 83-74 triumph over the juniors of Colegio San Agustin. "I'm very happy for the players. They've kept the faith. This is the first game of the season so we expect better performances as the tournament progresses," said Davao coach Jerry Codinera after Gerjo Fortea, a co-MVP in the SUAA grandstand.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Christian University Dolphins, who are the defending grand champions, also opened their campaign with a victory.

CDO takes 4x4 crown

CDO OFF-Roaders captured top honors in the Cagayan de Oro Chapter's Christmas Fun Run held recently in Valencia-Bukidnon, Pasay City, San Mariano, driving a modified Land Cruiser, clocked 59 minutes 51 seconds to bag the title while teammate Wilfredo Medel de Genius placed 12 minutes 30 seconds behind.

Other participants in the event organized by Northern Mindanao Off-Roaders Association of the Philippines (also formerly of Extreme Wheelers) included 13 12 2 Unlimited driver. The event was supported by Highland Trading Center, Dairy, Asia United Bank, Rebel Sport, Redbull, Super Bowl of Shoes, A-Joy Body Kits, Concept One to consultant Technology, Lemon Gulla, 3 Mod and Pro moss Body-ons.

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Sizzling start for new season of 'The Apprentice'

LAST Dec. 17, THE NEW SEASON OF "THE Apprentice"—Donald Trump" started wherever big on ABC 9 (it airs every Monday at 10 p.m.). The show got off to a sizzling start when the women's team was mercilessly ended by controversy: A Latina contestant named Melissa got on the wrong side of the other women.

She realized down the wrong way with her aggressive behavior and pungent vocabulary.

Things got so bad that her teammates all pleaded with Trump to kick her out of the show—or else!

The boss's team had fewer problems, but it wasn't so easy sown, either: Its boss of one, Bonnie was its chosen leader—an investor who had his doubts about whether he would make a good team manager.

But the boss's team outmaneuvered that problem, and sent an investor the women's first test: To make as much money as possible from special weekend classes for a health and body-building facility.

After the women lost, it was finger pointing time, and all of the fingers were pointed at Melissa. She complained all were friends in her self-defense, and made things even worse when she admitted that she couldn't work with women.

And, why not?

Because they want my time more because she and anyone that they are," the shot back—not realizing that she had just been served in the last nail in her coffin.

That's what makes "The Apprentice" a must see "business melodrama" for some viewers. Aside from the recorded and wonderful confessions, the show provides us with tips for anyone "about to die and what not to do" to our own quest for fulfilling work and fortune.

Talking points that emerged from the post-season telecast: Bonnie shows some weight around. Don't rub off your team leader and teammates. Be a team player.

Know your place in the team—and don't talk back to Donald Trump!

Incidentally, the new season of Trump's "Apprentice" is being shown by ABC 9 a day before Martha Stewart's own "Apprentice" (Tuesdays at 10 p.m.), which started telecasting last Oct. 18.

We think that's crazy and even "naughty" programming because it invites viewers to watch both shows and to make possible collusion contests between the two proposers and the very different hosting styles of Trump and Stewart.

Will Stewart trump Trump? Will Trump show Stewart the door? Why not catch both shows and decide for yourself?

'Art for Change'

THE ANNUAL "Art for Change" contest sponsored by the office of Sen. Ingrid Pimentel, Jr. will roll off on Oct. 29 at Robinsons Place ex- Ada corner Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City.

A brainchild of Sen. Pimentel, the contest seeks to inspire budding artists to develop their talent in painting.

Sen. Pimentel is inviting parents and their artistically inclined children to sign up for the one-day painting competition, which is now on its fifth year. Attractive prizes are at stake.

With the title as theme, young participants are asked to visualize their environment and its interpretation of the ongoing political ferment and other issues that affect the youth's lives and future.

The art sit is supported by Robinsons Place Manila, Cadbu Shweppes Inc., Satirical Bookstore, San Miguel Corp., De La Rosa Varsity Clothing, Universal Robina Corp., Rockwell Land Corp., Mercury Drug, Pacific Mould Ice Cream, Greenwich Store, Quinpo Printing Inc., The Manila Peninsula, Shopwise's Robo Publications Inc., Philippine Pepsi School for the Arts, Jollibee and Pan Pacific Manila, Call Kippie Sculpture at 552-0720 or 552-6745.

'Amazing Race' format deal

ABS-Asia has acquired the rights to localize the popular reality competition, "The Amazing Race."

The uniquely Asian edition of the challenge series promises to highlight the region's energy and diversity.

The 10 version of the show is scheduled by Mondiso viewers across Asia on ABS, so-be-produced and hosted by Ms. Ina Raymundo. Asia Asians should be even more popular with viewers to be region.

Chx doesn't live here anymore

From page A1

model who's also a comic and TV/M player.

Chx answered questions in a mix of English and Tagalog, controlling tears when asked about her parents in compromising poses circulating among the cellphone using public.

She admitted that it was indeed her private—which made her even more enjoyable among millions of PBB viewers. She never expected that the indiscretion, which was largely blamed on her ex-boyfriend, Love Charisse, would be leaked to the public.

Naughty poses

"I believed him (Love) when he said he didn't circulate the pictures," said Chx.

She explained that taking nude other's pictures was part of their lovemaking.

"I would take his picture with my cell phone. He (Love) took the pictures of his body including," said Chx. "He would take my picture in naughty poses using his cell phone. Using those things spiced up our love life."

She said both their cell phones were encrypted and no one could possibly access their private pictures, taken almost a year until a half ago.

"But I left my cell phone in a taxi cab," said Chx. "The taxi driver, who could have found it, must have figured out my password. Or he could have used the cell phone. I don't know."

The "deep pictures" naturally ended her ties to Love. Her also humiliated her family.

"My kids no longer want to leave the house," Chx said.

The kiss

The other issue she was asked at the press conference was her reunion kiss with Stan. She claimed it was as far as they got—sexually—in the PBB.

"Who wouldn't want to kiss Stan? Despite our role the PBB house went to kiss him. So do I," she said.

Chx is the fifth housemate evicted from the PBB house this season. She followed school teacher Raquel, whose the edged out in the last eviction by only a few thousand votes, and Bob, who was forced to quit for health reasons.

Here and if many she five to leave. Jenny evicted by left the PBB house after Stan, to meet her dying father, and then only after love rain. She has since returned to the PBB house to take over Bob's slot, as provided in the PBB rules and regulations.

The last housemate standing in PBB will bring home a total of P1 million worth of prizes, which are both a real million bucks and a house and lot package.

PBB housemates, including those evicted, have a standard six-month contract with ABS-CBN, where they would be groomed for stardom.

Asked by reporters if she'd like to have a showbiz career, Chx said:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
B1
BUSINESS

Email at business@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Raul D. Pangalangan
Assistant Editor Connie S. Bartolome

$3B in OFW remittances eludes banks

Informal channels take up 30% of inflows

By Doris C. Dumlao

AS MUCH AS $3 BILLION IN REmittances from overseas Filipino workers are still coursed through the informal channels, a government study showed.

Rafael Seneca, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) administrator, said that on top of the $8.02 billion in remittances reported to be captured by the banking system this year, about $3 billion were flowing in through informal channels or networks.

In a forum with the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines, he added that OFW flows would continue expanding in the years ahead and that the so-called leakages—or those not being captured by the banks—would gradually decline.

"As we are able to improve remittance systems and able to use technology, we'll see more and more portions of these remittances into the banking channel," Seneca said.

Based on a study on the Philcom experiment, remittances held as deposits in the banking system have a beneficial multiplier effect of between two to three times as these could be channeled to investments including small and medium enterprises. As such, the DOF is promoting the use of formal banking channels as a safer and more productive route remittance receipts for millions of OFWs.

But even if some OFW dollars were shunning the banking system as persons, Tesoro said these would still benefit the economy as a whole.

"It will pass into the country, still goes to

CONTINUED

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in your business life

Number of office building permits

(1st quarter 2003 to 2005)

Source: National Statistics Office and PSE estimates

MAJOR increases in the property sector during the 1990s led to an oversupply of office buildings which took years to be fully consumed, analysts pointed later. The construction industry experienced a rebound in the first quarter of 2003, when the number of new permits approved by local governments rose by 11.4 percent year-on-year. Since then, however, the number of new permits has been declining, with the first quarter of 2005 posting a decline of 20.4 percent from the same period in 2004. Analysts say the slowdown in new permits approved by local governments could be a sign that the property sector is overbuilding, compounded by investors' concerns over political uncertainty and their reluctance to invest in property. —GIL C. CABACUNGAN, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Shares rise 0.37%

SHARES POSTED A 0.37 percent higher yesterday thanks to bank values bargain hunting in selected stocks, dealers said.

They said trade continued cautious, however, with investors divided between closing deeper stocks and keeping on the sidelines following Wall Street's Monday overnight and in the absence of fresh leads.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 7.66 points to 1,994.10 after trading in a tight range between 1,985.11 and 1,996.17. Volume was 366.66 million shares worth ₱1. AFP

USED-CAR IMPORTS

SBMA resumes issuance of permits

By Bonnie W. Dominguez

THE BOARD OF THE SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN Authority has decided to resume processing applications for permits to import used vehicles despite fears of threat from local vehicle assemblers decrying the "smuggling" through the freeport.

According to a government source privy to the matter, the SBMA board made the decision in a meeting earlier this month.

The move was made considering that the Supreme Court has yet to rule with finality on whether the importation and entry of used vehicles through the Subic freeport was legal, according to the source.

The official said that since a prohibition was still not executory, the SBMA was duty-bound to entertain applications for import permits and act on them.

The official added that some 300 applications had been pending since the SBMA stopped processing such requests due to pressure from

CONTINUED

WHAT'S INSIDE

₱2.4B in projects gets BOI tax perks B3

Subic-Kaohsiung corridor planned B3

Breaktime: Thug of war B2

Single Asian currency eyed to fend off crises

By Dixie L. Lucid

ASIAN COUNTRIES MUST REVIVE EFFORTS to create a single currency that will not only foster greater regional trade, but also protect against external financial shocks similar to the 1997 East Asian financial crisis.

This was the recommendation made by Asian Development Bank president Haruhiko Kuroda on the region's future involvement in the war against foreign currency speculators on the part of foreign exchange investors held by countries in the region.

"Large trade surpluses and foreign direct

CONTINUED

Thug of war

IT IS NOT EVERY DAY THAT WE see—at least not down here in the boondocks—this most interesting legal battle royal (mixed with a big dose of sour) between two of the country's most influential business figures.

They are, of course, newspaper owner Eddie Ilarde and the Manila Hotel group, and Lucio Tan, one of the tapunan [i.e. Binondo/Chinese Filipinos] in the country's most influential business group.

Which the thug between the two is up the court to decide.

And the suspense is killing us down here.

We cannot wait to find out the concluding episode in this courtroom soap in the making, simply because it's only our future—as we will be paying for the whole thing—which the Supreme Court will decide on.

***

BAGGS on its petition before the Supreme Court, AEDC appears to have no choice but to file the case.

It alleged that the DOTC [or Department of Transportation and Communications] already decided against the AEDC claim to take over Naia 3.

AEDC quoted the letter from the Office of the Solicitor General:

"Mr. Ilarde can validly construct Philippine law, in vain, for the basis of what you claim is AEDC's vested and perfected legal right to operate [Naia 3]. . . ."

"We have also searched carefully for 1956 Memorandums of Understanding."

"We see nothing in it language to believe that there is any subsisting obligation on the part of government in recognize to AEDC the right to operate the terminal."

That "1995" MOU, precisely, was the agreement between the government and Mr. Enrique Eddie and the AEDC, as the original proponent of the "unsolicited" BOT project proposal.

Conrado R. Banal III

In effect, under that "1995" MOU, the Ilarde Eddie administration already awarded the project to AEDC. All of a sudden, AEDC was taken out of the project by Fidel Ramos—which Ilarde Supreme Court ally remembers.

And AEDC hopes on seeing in its petition that the Supreme Court already handed out to us plaintiffs [i.e., Dalwangco named Filipino, hosts the project].

AEDC thus claims that, as the original project proponent, it should now get the right to operate the terminal.

AEDC told the court that the issues in its case are important in the NOT sideways, which process is intends to give the private sector a big role in helping the government solve the country's infrastructure problems.

It is, in other words, not for anything else like an ongoing fight of the "Lion" against Kaplan or something like that, but the good of the country.

***

All said, back in the early 1990s, Enrique Eddie himself handmaked an exquisite Go Siling with Chinese Filipinos] to do something good for the country's MIDC was born out of the concept of public services—that architecture.

In an earlier ruling that erased the century between Aeropuerto [Nai

nation Gate Pasay] and the government, Eloi ers the Enrique Eddie administration], the Supreme Court noted anomalies in the process and in the contract itself.

We have been talking about all the backbiting in the final till this time, spanning three administrations already, including this one administration and the one it ousted, that of the man named Ilarde ... Wild Bunch.

That of them area, as AEDC pointed out in its new petition, that AEDC presented and secured on getting from the DOTC at that time, the details of the proposal from the Paircargo consortium [Same Pairco].

Under the BOT law, AEDC was supposed to match the proposal of the challenger, which was Paircargo consortium.

In answer to AEDC's request, the DOTC said that those things are ...well, "confidential."

Now the AEDC was supposed to match something that AEDC had no idea about. The DOTC of course began to say. And as AEDC went to court to right it out with the Paircargo consortium.

Subsequently, AEDC backed out of the case, saying it had resolved an out of court settlement with the Metro Banal administration.

But now, based on the new AEDC petition, the story can be told.

***

It seems that Metro Banal himself ordered the AEDC to withdraw the case against the DOTC that why?

The AEDC petition stated: "The President's (meaning, Metro Banal) direct intervention in the disposition of this unsolicited case was a clear imposition that Petitioner AEDC had no choice but to accept.

"To do otherwise was to take a confrontational stance against the most powerful man in the country then under the guise that of satisfying his ego, vehicle could have led to untold consequences upon the business interests of the stakeholders in AEDC.

"Thus, Petitioner AEDC was constrained to agree to the tapping of a joint motion to dismiss and to the filing of the same to avoid."

But then later, during the Senate hearings on the controversial Naia 3 project, the AEDC found out the reason behind Mike Banal's intervention.

It found out that, during the Ilarde Eddie administration, the DOTC had a secret agreement with the mga consortium Ilarde Pairco] on that same case.

And that was, if the AEDC would win, and the DOTC had to show AEDC the details of the proposal from Paircargo named Ilarde, which would then give AEDC the chance to get back the project, then the consortium would get kick quickly.

You see, the agreement required the government to give the consortium P180 million, just like that.

Incidentally the same secret agreement became public for the first time during the Senate hearings.

***

INTERESTINGLY enough, as that case administration of Gloriarroyo rejects outright the claim of AEDC over the Naia 3 as its original proponent under the BOT "unsolicited proposal" scheme, somebody once said something brilliant about the BOT law.

And it goes: "The object of the amendments is to promote projects which have already received the original design and in the preparation of the proposal, and which may have adopted an imaginative method of construction or approaches except for the proposal.

"The amendments also aims to harness the originality of the private sector to come up with solutions to the country's infrastructure problems."

Again, all that referred to the BOT law. And the words were reversed by a certain lady senator back then by the name of Gloria Macapal-Arroyo, whose own administration of Elizabeth today seems to go the opposite direction.

From AEDC said so is in petition.

That's all for now, but I'll back in future pieces on this legal battle royale between Kaplan and the "lion."

SBMA resumes issuance . . .

From page B1

ed to some Hello court.

"But there is reason to believe that the market for used vehicles imports is declining," the official said.

"There are around 3,000 import permit still unused," the source added. "If demand is still weak, those permits should have been depleted a long time ago."

SBMA records show that since 2001, at least 19,000 cars, commercial vehicles and luxury equipment have entered the freeport.

Asked about reports that Hello subang had given the go-ahead for used vehicle importation "in essence," the source said the SBMA received no such statement or directive.

Last month, local assemblers expressed cracks that Mabuhaying unloved all concerned departments and agencies to allow the entry of imported used vehicles into the Subic special economic zone, which the industry blames for its slow recovery and stunting of the local market.

Elizabeth H. Lee, vice president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, said the order was likely to arrest the already slow growth in overall sales since the used vehicles end up on their relatively small market.

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines
[illegible]

Bidding Services & various Spare Parts for NPC Small Power Utilities Group

1. The National Power Corporation (NPC), through its appropriated Corporate Budget and/or other sources, intends to apply the sum of [illegible] being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to cover the cost of the Contract for the procurement under Subscription of the NPC, and for subsequently awarded in this agency.

2. NPC now invites Bids for the supply [illegible] for GOODS as listed below. Delivery of the GOODS is required to the sites indicated in the bid documents. The bidder may be an eligible bidder as indicated in Section II of the Bidding Documents.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pre-qualification criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of [illegible] and [illegible] as the Government Procurement Reform Act, [illegible] and is open to all interested [illegible] organizations with all qualifications as defined in the Bidding Documents. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the [illegible] and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during [illegible] hours.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon the payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount [illegible]. It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the [illegible] provided that bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

5. NPC will require the Bid Conference open to all interested parties on dates listed below at the [illegible] Conference Room.

6. Bids must be delivered on or before the date/time at the address as stated in Section II. Bids received [illegible] will be returned unopened. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form as stated in the Bid Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on the dates specified hereinabove at the designated NPC Conference rooms. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

8. OTHER TERMS:

Schedule	Date/Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	PR No./ Inquiry No.	ABC (in Pesos)	Bid Docs. Fees
I	[illegible]	Supply of NPC technical personnel, materials requirements only for the [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
II	[illegible]	Computer Learning [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
III	[illegible]	Spare Parts for [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
IV	[illegible]	Spare Parts for [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
V	[illegible]	Bidding Services: Pre-to-Date [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
VI	[illegible]	Parts for Air Compressor [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

(NOTE: A Pre-bidding Conference will not be held for the following bidding opportunities:

Schedule	Date	Time	Place
Schedule I - IV	Nov. 8, 2005	[illegible]	[illegible]

9. NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
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Landco plans new projects

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY DEVELOPER LANDCO PACIFIC Corp., a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Corp., is set to launch five more projects, including the first-ever development in the 400-hectare Villa Escudero in San Pablo City, Laguna, said Landco senior vice president Alfred Xerex-Roupael B.

Landco assistant vice president Michael Reyes said during the Good News Realties at the Global Cafe in Makati yesterday that Landco would need at least P1 billion to finance all the Villa Escudero developments.

The development will consist of residential villages, retirement homes and projects related to tourism.

Landco signed an agreement with Villa Escudero Corp. in August to develop the 500-hectare property into a mixed-use tourism project.

The first phase of Hacienda Escudero, which will cover approximately 20 hectares, is estimated to cost roughly P500 million.

Aside from Hacienda Escudero, Landco plans a joint venture with Capitol Hills Golfview Development Corp. for a 150-hectare golf course estate in Batasan Hills, Quezon City.

Landco plans to tap low and several home buyers, and promises a vacation home just in the vicinity of Quezon City.

Landco is also set to launch Punta Fuego's newest lifestyle concept dubbed "Azores on the Ocean", an exclusive condominium community made up of rooms from residences with the luxury of having a private beach and the convenience of condominium living.

P2.4B in projects gets BOI tax perks

By Roland W. Domingo

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS (BOI) approved tax perks for some P2.4 billion worth of investments, including the first batch of eight projects under its accelerated registration efforts.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said the BOI's board of governors granted a new pioneer status to Rustic Glass Philippines Inc.'s P1.39-billion expansion in their glass line.

Hernandez, who is also BOI managing head, explained that the project was the last stage of floating modern glass in a tin bath to produce float-size flat glass.

He said the investment granted to ACR included a four-year tax holiday and duty-free importation of capital equipment.

The project would bring ACR's float glass production capacity to 140,000 metric tons yearly from 140,000 MT.

Also, Hernandez said the BOI had granted perks to eight projects through a pilot run of its simplified approval process aimed at reducing to a day the 20-working-day approval period set by law.

With the accelerated approval process, the entire registration procedure—including the issuance of the registration papers—would be cut short to four days from the usual 20 days.

"We expect to fully implement this process in January 2006 and hopefully make it the usual way of registering investments," Hernandez said.

The eight projects include Royal Master Philippines' P174-million, new-tech ecology chipboarding venture in Davao, Barrington.

Royal plans to produce a medium, a virgin wood and an oil-dig ball mat/carpet.

The output is meant for the markets in Europe, the Middle East and other parts of Asia.

The other projects are Hexatronic Corp.'s P4.3-million wireless communication project; Pure Builders Realty Development Corp.'s P45-million low-cost housing project; Golden Canvas Marine Resources Corp.'s P30-million commercial fishing venture; RT Global Investigated Consulting Inc.'s P31-million low engineering design project; MD Salmon Solutions Inc.'s P6-million diagnostic services project; 3D West Distribution Technologies Inc.'s P5-million medical laboratories project; and Phil-Cross Enterprises Corp.'s P26-million investment in okra farming.

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Email: cebrazilian@hotmail.com
Seminar Schedule:
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11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. - New Zealand immigration overview
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GMA-7 profit up 58% in 9 months

By Carlos S. Santos

GMA NETWORK INC. REPORTED a net income of more than P900 million in the third quarter, letting the total for the first nine months to P1.74 billion or 58 percent higher than the P1.49 billion a year ago.

GMA president Felipe Gozon said the network would definitely exceed its P2-billion profit target for the year.

The broadcast firm posted a net profit of about P1.5 billion in 2009.

The network's growing profitability puts it in a stronger position to do an initial public offering in the first quarter of 2011. The plan is to sell 20 to 30 percent of the company and raise about P8 billion.

Property are even more with the launching in November of Channel 11's QTV or Quality TV, which will be powered by GMA 7. Channel expansion is also ongoing.

Meanwhile Nasik and 45% listing are conducting a due-diligence audit on the ongoing moderization the market value of GMA 7. Gozon said he believed the new audit would place the company's value at more than P10 billion.

"The target is to push through with the IPO by the first quarter '06 are still on track," he said.

Gozon said revenue revenue from January to September reached P7.23 billion or 23 percent higher than the P5.45 billion in the same period in 2009.

Airtime numbers, he said, showed that GMA 7 continued to dominate the ratings despite aggressive efforts of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. to regain its lead.

"We are still very much ahead in the ratings," he said. "And our lead is even increasing rather than decreasing."

GMA 7's total assets went up 21 percent as of end-September to P5.48 billion from P7.45 billion a year ago.

$3B in OFW ...

From page B1

consumption and other uses in the economy," Tetangco said.

"That's why in the BOP (balance of payments), are we to capture some of them by investing them? I wouldn't 20 percent that is being coursed through non-banks. That's a conservative estimate, because the survey shows it's somewhere between 20-30 percent," he added.

The OFW survey which estimated the leakages was done by the Department of Labor and Employment together with economic offices abroad.

"We're asking banks to come up with products that OFWs can use, for those who don't have the time or inclination to go into business," Tetangco said.

He said the BSP was likewise studying ways to link OFW remittances with microfinance.

"The $16 billion (expected to flow this year) is a big amount and we have a lot of people in the microfinance sphere are interested in (expressed) interest," Tetangco said.

From a stop-gap measure initiated by the government to curb unemployment in the 1970s, overseas employment has developed into a vital lasting generating foreign exchange ensuring foreign investment inflows.

"Looking forward, we see that there's still potential for further expansion in the industry, for a number of reasons. One, there is increasing demand, especially from countries where aging population is aging," Tetangco said.

Single Asian ...

From page B1

investment inflows have contributed to an increase in East Asia's foreign exchange reserves from about $600 billion in 2007 to more than $2 trillion — more than half of global reserves—by July 2010," he said.

Because of this vast amount of reserves, the ADB chief said Asian countries should allow greater exchange rate flexibility which was a "missed opportunity" to stimulate.

He said he was encouraged by the recent moves of the People's Republic of China and Malaysia to shift to a "managed floating exchange rate" in recent months, away from a rigid currency peg which resulted in those initiatives with trading partners.

Kuroda gave his remarks during yesterday's Governor Jose E. Brocka Jr. Memorial Lecture at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas City.

Speaking to a broad audience composed of bankers, businessmen, academics and members of the diplomatic community, the ADB president urged leaders of Asian nations to pass three monetary policies toward binding off another financial crisis. In particular, Kuroda urged economic managers to be ready to let their currencies appreciate against the dollar to better reflect economic realities.

"In the undoubtable event of [a] sharp exchange rate adjustment in the future affecting trans-Pacific imbalances, the East Asian economies will have to be ready to collectively appreciate vis-à-vis the US dollar while maintaining relative stability among the regional economies, thus minimizing the adjustment cost to individual economies.

Kuroda's recommendation, however, will likely be frowned upon by Asia's economic giants—Japan, China and South Korea—which rely on relatively weak currencies to make their exports more attractive to buyers in the US and Europe.

Subic-Kaohsiung corridor planned

By Ramon W. Dominguez

MANILA—THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE Philippines and Taiwan are in talks on developing a ground transportation and link the economic zones of Subic and Kaohsiung in a way to speed up transit time from one port.

Antonio L. Basilio, resident representative at the Manila Economic and Cultural Office here, said the idea was to put up a corridor of efficient and seamless manufacturing zone where people from both shores would be free to move.

"Counterpart teams are still executing on how to realize this economic corridor, but we hope we can have some preliminary agreements soon," Basilio said.

The Subic officials said key components for such a corridor would include every vision that were valid for longer than the usual 14 days and less discriminatory requirements for import-export shipments from both shores.

Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs Minister Lee Yuan-tsu in an interview that a Subic-Kaohsiung corridor made a lot of sense because the two areas were a mere hour-long flight away from each other.

The Kaohsiung Export Processing Zone, located in Taiwan's largest industrial area and at the maritime port city of the same name, is touted as the world first economy.

"So RP-Taiwan FTA may take time but it could start with an economic corridor agreement," he said. "That is (very doable) and is not against the regulations of the World Trade Organization."

He said Taiwan hoped an agreement could be finalized as soon as possible and that steps to put up the corridor could start within the year.

Tang Sheng-hao, director general of Taiwan's Export Processing Zone Administration, said Taiwanese firms awaited assurances as their access to the Philippine market; easy application process of Kaohsiung locators who want to invest in Subic; and smooth flow of workers and corporate officials between the zones.

"For example, the Philippine government might be persuaded to export goods made by Taiwanese firms in India—which has only 25 percent local input—as a local product and thus can be sold easily in the market," Tang said.

Another proposal from Taiwan was for workers and business officials to be able to shuttle between Kaohsiung and Subic without having to secure visas.

In an interview last September, Basilio said that under the proposal, businesses operating in Subic and Kaohsiung would enjoy investrax that are available in all the free zones.

Globe to refinance $300M in debts

By Clarissa S. Rubio

GLOBE TELECOM INC. IS DEALing with banks on the possible refinancing of between $100 million and $300 million in debts before the end of this year.

Globe chief financial officer Delfin Gonzalez confirmed that the telecom firm was studying loan offers of some banks. Loan proposals are $50 bn and peso-denominated.

He declined to say how much of the existing debts the company was planning to refinance but said it could be substantial.

Negotiations with creditors are ongoing, he said.

Globe has about $500 million in outstanding debts, of which $300 million is maturing this year and $140 million falling due in 2006.

The joint venture of Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom is taking advantage of a better credit rating from Moody's Investors Service to refinance its debt load.

In July, Moody's upgraded Globe's foreign currency debt ratings mainly on its $1.3 loan fac1.

The New York-based debt watchdog affirmed Globe's local currency rating as an investment grade level of Baa3 with a positive outlook.

Prepaying debts would allow the telco with huge dollar obligations earning revenues in pesos, saved up in debt reduction programs, and minimize currency risks.

SMIC to issue ₱5B worth of debt notes

SM INVESTMENTS CORP. (SMIC), THE flagship company of tycoon Henry Sy Sr., inked an agreement with a consortium of five banks for the issuance of P5 billion worth of debt notes this month.

Sources said the notes, to be issued on Oct. 28, would be used to refinance a bridge loan used by the Sy group to purchase shares in the unlisted PCI Bank and San Miguel Corp., and to fund working capital.

The notes will mature in five and seven years, and will carry a combination of fixed and floating interest rates.

SMIC Capital and Investments Corp., SMIC's arm first, is the note manager and sole book runner. Lead managers for the note issue include BPI Capital Corp., Citicorp Capital Philippines Inc., First Metro Investment Corp. and ING Bank N.V. Manila branch.

SMIC chief financial officer Jose Ibo said in an interview that the debt issue was fully underwritten by investment banks. Although the initial feedback from qualified investors was strong, Ibo said SMIC would not likely raise the size of the issue.

SM investments has interests in retail, mall, property development, leisure and banking. Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Public Works and Highways

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Project / Schedule Date | Class. AB | Approved Budget for the Contract (Inclusive of Value Added Tax) | Bidding Date / Venue (CO 1st)

1. The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) through its duly constituted Committee on Prequalification and Bids (CPB) invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects:
2. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years and an annual value of at least 50% of the corresponding prospective bidding and have key contractual and technical personnel, equipment and financial capacity available for the execution of the contract. Their Eligibility Classification as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall be considered in evaluating their offers. The Classification of the known eligible bidders shall be maintained.
3. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bid/Post-qualification, Evaluation of Bids, Award, Qualification and Disqualification shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
4. Bid documents will be available starting **October 28, 2005** from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the 5th Floor PMO-BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable amount of:
   ₱XXX,XXX.XX (Project A) ₱XXX,XXX.XX (Project B) ₱XXX,XXX.XX (Project C)
5. The PMO-BAC will conduct its **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested bidders on **October 28, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.** 5th Floor Procurement and Management Office, 124 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.
6. **Deadline for Submission of Bids/Eligibility Requirements and Bid Opening** shall be on **November 10, 2005** at the 5th floor, Procurement and Management Office, 124 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City with the following schedules:
   XX(AM/PM) (Project A) XX(AM/PM) (Project B) XX(AM/PM) (Project C)
   Late bid or bid not in the prescribed form, bid submitted without the required bid security, bid submitted without the presence of the bidder or their representative who signed the bid form, bid not accompanied by a **Bid Security** in any of the forms stated in this Bidding Documents **shall not be accepted.**

Form of Bid Security	Project	% of ABC	Corresponding Amt
Certified check, Cashier's/Manager's check, BID	XXX Location Vicinities XX (Volume)	1%	XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX
Bank guarantee, BID	XXX Location Vicinities XX (Volume)	1 1/2%	XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX
Surety Bond	XXX Location Vicinities XX (Volume)	2 1/2%	XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX

7. The PMO-BAC reserves its respective prerogative to compromise or indemnify bidders for any meritorious situation in the implementation of this IAB.
8. Moreover, the **PMO-BAC** reserves its rights to reject any or all bid proposals, waive any formality in the bid requirements, declare the nothing-is-false certification filing/submission as ground for forfeiture of the bid security, or suspend the conduct of the bidding/awarding activity to the **Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid** and even accomplishes to the Government.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC)
(SGD.) **VIRGINIA S. LEGASPI**
Chairperson, PMO-BAC

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Privatization and Management Office (PMO), through its duly constituted Committee (Bids), invites Security Agencies to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Generation projects for a contract duration (PMO/PMT Level):

Description	No. of Guards	Approved Budget (PHILIPPINE PESOS - Per Annum)
Hiring of Security Services for HDB	56	14,707,104.00
Hiring of Security Services for Luzon	64	16,810,560.00
Hiring of Security Services for Visayas	24	6,303,360.00
Hiring of Security Services for Mindanao	32	8,404,480.00
	216	

2. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years and an annual value of at least 50% of the corresponding prospective bidding and have key contractual and technical personnel, equipment and financial capacity available for the execution of the contract. Their Eligibility Classification as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall be considered in evaluating their offers. The Classification of the known eligible bidders shall be maintained.
3. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bid/Post-qualification, Evaluation of Bids, Award, Qualification and Disqualification shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
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   ₱XXX,XXX.XX (Project A) ₱XXX,XXX.XX (Project B) ₱XXX,XXX.XX (Project C)
5. The PMO-BAC will conduct its **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested bidders on **October 28, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.** 5th Floor Privatization and Management Office, 124 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.
6. **Deadline for Submission of Bids/Eligibility Requirements and Bid Opening** shall be on **November 10, 2005** at the 5th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 124 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City with the following schedules:
   XX(AM/PM) (Project A) XX(AM/PM) (Project B) XX(AM/PM) (Project C)
   Late bid or bid not in the prescribed form, bid submitted without the required bid security, bid submitted without the presence of the bidder or their representative who signed the bid form, bid not accompanied by a **Bid Security** in any of the forms stated in this Bidding Documents **shall not be accepted.**

Form of Bid Security	Project	% of ABC	Corresponding Amt
Certified check, Cashier's/Manager's check, BID	XXX Location Vicinities XX (Volume)	1%	XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX
Bank guarantee, BID	XXX Location Vicinities XX (Volume)	1 1/2%	XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX
Surety Bond	XXX Location Vicinities XX (Volume)	2 1/2%	XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX XXX,XXX.XX

7. The PMO-BAC reserves its respective prerogative to compromise or indemnify bidders for any meritorious situation in the implementation of this IAB.
8. Moreover, the **PMO-BAC** reserves its rights to reject any or all bid proposals, waive any formality in the bid requirements, declare the nothing-is-false certification filing/submission as ground for forfeiture of the bid security, or suspend the conduct of the bidding/awarding activity to the **Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid** and even accomplishes to the Government.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC)
(SGD.) **VIRGINIA S. LEGASPI**
Chairperson, PMO-BAC

BUSINESS

BSP sees foreign investments hitting $1.2B

Inflows of FDIs, 'hot money' expected to remain healthy in '06

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS expects the country to lure $1.2 billion in fresh foreign direct investments next year, 20 percent better than the $999 million projected for this year.

The bulk of the properties now in restrictive would likely be poured into the manufacturing, mining and energy sectors, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a forum with the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines yesterday.

Tetangco added that the country would be within the realm of investment for as long as the prevailing political noise would not hamper the government's economic reform agenda.

"We have taken a number of steps to improve the investment environment, including the ruling by the Supreme Court saying that the Mining Act was constitutional," Tetangco said.

As he said law favors the entry of foreign investors into the mining sector, the high court's decision is sure attracting more foreign investors.

"Also, our biggest assets are the people. We have highly skilled, English-speaking workers and, according to a regional survey, really trained and knowledgeable," Tetangco said.

He said Filipinos were likewise enjoying comparative advantages available in call-in the call-center industry.

"There will be investments in call-centers, BPO (business process outsourcing), which are generally labor intensive but requirements capital," Tetangco said.

FDI flows represent investments in productive businesses.

From January to July this year, the country generated $499 million worth of FDIs, more than double the $241 million a year ago, despite escalating political and economic jitters.

"I'm not an expert on politics but I think what investors are really looking at is whether or not political developments would have an impact on economic reforms that we're supposed to implement," Tetangco said.

He said that next to the second quarter of the year—when the election-rigging and illegal gambling payoff controversies erupted—the financial markets briefly reacted. The market reaction was strongest when a petition was filed at the Supreme Court questioning the legality of the expanded value-added tax.

As the eventual suspension of the VAT law was perceived as something that would affect the government's fiscal consolidation, it weighed down heavily on the financial markets, he said.

Investors would react negatively if there's evidence that political developments were beginning to impact on economics, but it's just look at what's happening in the economy right now, the picture is quite favorable," Tetangco said.

The SC has recently lifted the temporary restraining order on the VAT law, paving the way for its implementation starting November.

"We are investor-ready, on the basis of portfolio returns and FDIs, continuing to flow mainly into manufacturing, energy and mining," he said.

Transco to check Sucat-Araneta transmission lines

By Abigail L. Ho

LAGUNA, CEBU—TRANSCO'S POWER OUTage in remote cities in Mindanao and more by provinces has prompted the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) to examine some of its transmission lines.

In an interview here Tuesday evening, Transco president and chief executive Allen Ortiz said the state firm would have to inspect other lines connecting from the Sucat-Araneta line, which tripped Tuesday and caused power outages in Makati, Pasay, Taguig, Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, Parañaque and Laguna.

"What happened emphasizes the fragility of our national grid. These obviously need to be reinforced," he said separately.

He noted that the tripping was a first for the Sucat-Araneta line. Although it had been in existence for about 25 years, the line had never tripped before.

He said Transco was still investigating the cause of the tripping, adding that it could have been something as trivial as a fallen tree limb or someone's kite hitting the line.

The Sucat-Araneta line was very important, he said, as it represented the junction between the north and south power grids.

While it would be quite easy for Transco to construct other lines, he said upgrading them, if necessary, was a different story as such upgrades were not part of the state firm's programmed capital expenditure budget.

"Upgrades are not included in our approved capex. I don't think it's even part of the capex program in the next five years," he said. "We'll look at the lines. We'll go from there, see what needs to be done," he added.

KITCHEN Rescue
unscrambles eggs into /C4

Editor
Chuie Bassil Perueve

Lolo Susing's nameless specialty

BILLIONAIRE Puto

By Dorris Gabriel Bordeo

I USED TO PREPARE THIS snack/dessert for family and friends. They love it with a cup of hopeng Batangas or with my Ilo's tuokoluang buirol.

My Lolo Susing prepared this merienda for the whole family usually during special gatherings like reunions, birthdays and other important family occasions.

I remember once we hosted a dinner of our class. I helped my Lolo Susing prepare this. I was so amazed by his technique. I asked my lolo what to call this dish. He smiled and answered, "I don't know!"

By the age of 15, I was preparing this snack all by myself, even making my own variations like using as filling mixtures of munggo, ube, leso, and even leftover dishes such as morado, adobo and tortang giniling.

When I worked in a Japanese-inspired international restaurant in Casino Filipino in Angeles City as a chef, I always included this as a dessert in our daily buffet.

His family loves it, his Japanese boss loves it, and he loves it so he has had to think of a name for grandpa's recipe

My Japanese employer loved it and always asked me to prepare boxes of the snack for him to bring to Japan. He gave them as presents to his friends. Now that the dish has become popular with Filipinos and Japanese, I have to have a name for this.

"Balleseong Puto," as I now call it, has been included by my employer in our restaurant's pastry list as a dessert. Puto is generic Kapampangan for bread.

I'm sure Lolo Susing is very proud of me.

PHI FAMILY RECIPES CONTEST

Balleseong Puto

Filling:
½ c of leftover morado, minasnang na munggo, ube halaya or tortang giniling
½ tsp butter

Coating:
3 c white-colored sesame seeds
¼ c black sesame seeds
2 pcs medium sized fresh eggs, beaten
oil for deep frying
¼ c sesame oil (optional)
10 pcs leftover slices of loaf bread

Procedure:

Slice off the brown edges of the bread. Use a bottle as rolling pin to make each bread slice flat and thin. When flattened, put a small amount of butter on the bread and a spoonful of the chosen filling. Roll the flattened bread with filling, forming a log shape. Dip the edges into the beaten egg and roll over sesame seeds.

Preheat vegetable oil and add the sesame oil then deep-fry the log breads in oil golden brown. Cut diagonally and serve hot.

Variation: When using ube or munggo filling, top the bread with sweetened coconut cream to add rice and flavor.

¼ c coconut cream
¼ c white sugar

Mix and boil until it has thickened.

Win SM Supermarket gift checks

LIFESTYLE IS LOOKING FOR family recipes that use traditional Filipino techniques and ingredients.

Send us your family recipes and, if your entry is chosen, you can win P2,000 worth of SM Supermarket gift checks, a gift from Imarflex or a class of choice at the Reggie Aquino School of Culinary Arts.

Tell us who in your family first cooked and served the recipe; how many generations have cooked it; when it is usually cooked and served.

Include a photo of the dish and your name, address, daytime telephone number and e-mail address, if any.

Entries should be mailed or delivered to: PHI Family Recipes Contest, c/o Lifestyle, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10th Chino Roces Ave. Makati City 1200. Or e-mail it: recipes@inquirer.com.ph. Be sure to include your complete details, e-mail lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph.

Winners may claim their prizes from the PDI marketing office.

New code may improve bank service

CONSUMERS WHO TRUST THEIR hard-earned money to the banks should expect good service. But, if we go by some of the complaints sent to this column, banks often fail to satisfy customers.

Well, there's good news! The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and the different banking associations have come up with a service code that ensures that everything related to the delivery of banking services in the Philippines.

The Service Code for Consumers Banking in the Philippines covers several bank products and services such as deposit, investment, credit card (allcdaphil's card) loans. Three main areas of consumer concerns are discussed under the following headings: Know Your Bank, Know Your Product and Know Your Security Measures.

We should get a copy of the code, if only for the information and tips it contains. The section on security measures, for example, contains information on how to prevent fraud, identity theft, and unauthorized access to personal accounts and funds.

The code has the following objectives:

- Promote transparency for clients to have better understanding of what to expect from banks and [their] products and services;
- Set minimum service standards to be observed for consistent banking practices among banks;
- Uplift and professionalize the local banking industry to world-class standards;
- Strengthen relationships between banks and clients.

It took more than a year to finalize the code. To use the words of the BSP spokesperson, "The draft version went through a multi-phase year-long evaluation, and endless polishing and strengthening before the code was finally launched."

The final version of the code was formally launched last Monday by officials of BSP and the following banking associations: Bankers Association of the Philippines, Chamber of Thrift Banks, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines, Credit Card Association of the Philippines and Bank Marketing Association of the Philippines (BMAP).

There's one fly in the ointment, though. As the BSP spokesperson explained, adherence to the code is only voluntary. In other words, banks may or may not abide by the standards of the code.

To us who, from time to time, find fault in the banking service, having a set of standards for good service is good enough, is the main issue. One can wish, however, in for the BSP or BMAP to inform the public what banks are subscribing to the code.

So, after the launch, what's next? According to our BSP source, a series of orientation seminars for banks will be organized in the coming months by BMAP, which is serving as a "first the Code firm up to its objectives."

Banks that will abide by the code are expected to prominently display signs saying "This bank subscribes to the Service Code for Consumer Banking in the Philippines."

Bad guys in banking

Here are some complaints from our mailbox.

Billy Ram P. wrote: "There ought to be a law against telemarketers and trade credit card collectors who call offices. Where can we complain about collectors representing this particular bank [name withheld] who serve rude to our officemates with unpaid credit card bills? They also leave rude messages with the operator alternately threats and insults but use the creditor."

Rose Dakota H.: "I applied for a credit card in a bank, but was told that, being over 65, I was not qualified. The credit card representative also said the bank was very strict and would not accept me because I didn't have a job anymore.

"It's true that I am retired, but I also receive a pension from my SSS and I have a visa from the Philippine Retirement Authority [called an SRRV]. Isn't this age discrimination [illegal]? Besides, it seems to me that the purpose of having a job is to have a steady income. What difference does it make if [income] is pension or salary?"

From fellow senior columnist Lydia Castillo: "This happened on a Saturday. I was going to withdraw money from the ATM. As a habit, I first checked my account balance. I got the tape. Then I typed in the withdrawal command, but surprise of surprises, no cash was dispensed. The only thing that came out was the transaction tape with the withdrawal already recorded.

"When I called the bank, I was told by a customer service that it would take three days to return the undispensed amount to my account. The following Monday, I talked to another person at the bank. He was unpleasant, did not bother to apologize and considered the case closed after telling me to wait until ten days for the error to be corrected."

How about afternoon coffee?

THE TWO TRADITIONS OF AFTERNOON TEA and coffee drinking have been combined in one experience at Jiraffe's Tarrel Espresso Bar entitle its High on Coffee special at Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center, Makati from 2-5 p.m.

The High on Coffee set consists of a two-tiered platter containing savory canapés and sweets, and a served with espresso, latte, mocha or a pot of tea for two.

On the sweet plate are sweet puffs with fruity linseed toast and custard filling; blueberry cream cheese tarts; almond cranberry made of sugar biscuit dough and topped with drizzle of almonds; tuquillas chocolates; and mini balls. These, fudgy, rum-soaked chocolate cake balls have bits of fruit in them and are coated with a chocolate crumble glaze.

The savory plate consists of smoked salmon canapés with onion garlic dressing, crab salad finger sandwiches with egg mayonnaise and topped with roe, bacon rolls dressed with sour cream and served over a slice of cucumber and tomato; herbed quiche; and pan-grilled chicken teriyaki rolls wrapped in whole wheat bread.

Good for two, the High on Coffee special is available at the reasonable price of P395.

Going for the gold

Continued P3

- Dalisay—the thick, cold-like strands of egg white attached to two sides of the yolk and anchor it to the center of the egg. The more prominent the chalazae, the fresher the egg.
- Eggs must always be refrigerated. When stored at room temperature, they lose more quality in one day than in a week in the refrigerator.
- Eggs easily absorb odors so keep them away from strong smelling substances.

Cooking eggs

- Assembled: Cook eggs on a bowl, beat slightly, add salt, pepper and herbs if you wish. I like adding a bit of acid—vinegar or lemon juice. I like the slight swelling it does to my eggs. Then, after cooking, I add a bit of cream and do a quick whisk. The addition of fat/acid and cream does wonders to the consistency. The secret to scrambled eggs is slow cooking over low heat. Use a heat proof rubber spatula to move the eggs. Use a level of medium and take the eggs off from the heat when they are just about set, leaving them a bit underdone as they don't dry up.

To be continued next week

For comments or suggestions, text 0917-[illegible]

Marinella Bolasco Glocor

'Spooky' treats for Halloween

PREPARE "SPOOK" TACULAR goodies for little trick-and-treaters this Halloween.

San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center shares three recipes to feed hungry little souls indoor and plan Fiesta.

For other recipes, visit www.sanmiguelfood.com or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center, (c/papa) or Ms. Gilda Olivares, Back to Eating, Pasig City.

Tombstone nuggets

1 pack Magnolia Chicken Nuggets
2 t Magnolia Nutri Oil
¼ t barbecue sauce (store-bought)
Pineapple tidbits, cherries, tomato slices for garnishing

Heat Magnolia Nutri Oil in a wok. Deep fry chicken nuggets in hot oil. Skewer nuggets with toothpick and garnish with pineapple tidbits, cherries and tomato slices. Serve with barbecue sauce.

Makes 4 servings.

Bloody spaghetti

1 tbsp Dan's Crème
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp minced garlic
½ t chopped onions
2 tsp Spanish paprika
1 pack Monterey Garbanzo Longanisa, casings removed and filling mashed
½ t tomato sauce
½ cup milk
200 g spaghetti
½ t grated Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

Heat Dan's Crème margarine and olive oil in a small saucepan. Sauté garlic and onions. Add paprika and Monterey Garbanzo Longanisa. Mix well and cook for a few minutes over medium heat. Add tomato sauce and season with salt. Cook, stirring for two minutes then remove from heat. Pour sauce over cooked pasta. Top with grated cheese.

Makes 4 servings.

Creepy crunchies

1 lb pan pandesal
½ t Star Sweet Blend Margarine
½ t condensed milk

Slice pandesal into quarters. Set aside. Melt star margarine. Dip pandesal and brush with condensed milk. Place in an oven toaster and cook until crisp and golden in color.

Let cool and wrap in cellophane bags for giveaways.

Makes 40 pieces.

Freaky dogwich

2 tbsp Magnolia Nutri Oil
1 lb pan Pinchuelo TJ Regular Hotdogs
1 lb pan pandesal
½ t Star Margarine

Pan fry Pinchuelo TJ hotdogs in oil. Set aside.*

Slice pandesal into two. Spread split side with Star Margarine. Top with cooked hotdogs. Cover with the other half of pandesal to make a sandwich.

Makes 10 sandwiches.

*You may also slice hotdogs to achieve a spiral look.

Time to go 'tweek n tweeting'

THIS HALLOWEEN, LET YOUR kids go on a "Tweek 'n' Tweet," Oct. 29-31, at Bubba Gump. They will have a great time with Bubba Gump's kiddie food favorites like Mama Gump's Chicken Strips, Lil' Forrest's Favorite Fish & Chips, Itsa Beach Burger, and an assortment of Ping Pong Pizzas.

As a Halloween treat, kids can order a new kiddie party piece which includes spaghetti, Bubba Bubba Fruit Shrimps with Rice, a slice of Itsa and Cheese Ping Pong Pizza, Ice Breeze sweets.

Kids with the best Halloween costumes will also get treats. A magician and a balloon artist will do the Halloween "tweeks" for kids 12 noon-2 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.

Big "kids" who come in costumes Saturday to Monday will get a free Bloody Mary, a treat by Bubba Gump specialty Mahimia Rum Inc.

Bubba Gump is at 2/F Greenbelt 5 (near the fountain). Call 757-5154.

"TWEEN or Tweet" as Bubba Gump, whether it's Halloween or a birthday party, is a scream.

Celebrate Halloween and get freebies

CHOWKING Mesh gives a free Kiddie Meal with every adult meal ordered in all kiddie-cubes menus in any Halloween attire. The restaurant has prepared special surprises, toys, candies and balloons for children who'll visit the place. Chowking Mesh is located at Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati. Call 891-8128.

BARCLAY American Bar and Restaurant celebrates Halloween on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 by giving away free batchmeal and loot bags full of toys and candies to all kids who come in any Halloween attire. Barclay is located at Tomas Morato, QC, Power Plant Mall, Makati, The Podium, Ortigas Center, The Promenade, San Juan, Gateway Mall, QC. Call 851-9324, 888-84-5/68-9294.

SHAKEY'S brings the Crunch Fest promo, available until Nov. 14, for a crunchy Halloween season. Families can enjoy the Crunch for less with a mega Mexican Pepperoni Crunch Pizza, four pieces of Chicken N Mojos, four drinks of choice, and four Nestle Crunch chocolates. Couples can have the Crunch for two with a regular Mexican Pepperoni Crunch pizza, two pieces of Chicken N Mojos and two drinks of choice. Shakey's will also give away three P10,000 prizes and a grand prize for every piece of the month purchase. Text Shakeys 30 to 2906. The promo is valid in all Shakey's restaurants nationwide. Shakey's continues to give great food, great value and great service because "Nothing Shakes like Shakey's." For delivery, dial 8228000.

Going for the gold in Singapore

HAIL TO THE TEAM! (Back) Erick Balduran, Orlemar Frei, Virgilio Timola, Bobbi Castillo, Hyrna Bagtasmado, Arvi Manuel, Herbert Gandler, J. Gamboa. (Front) Ace Cacanindin, Jaime de Vera, Arnold Quevarra, Humphrey Navarra

We just celebrated World Chef's Day last Oct. 20, and what a blast it was. We always look forward to occasions where we can come together, share the same passions and love for food and celebrate the profession that has been kind to us.

While dining on Humphrey's creation—P45 Jamjahn Black Cow Skirt with Grape Confit, Fresh Buffalo Mozzarella, Smoked Duck Breast, Wild Cranberry Cream, Fresh Greens in Raspberry Truffle Dressing), Cappuccino of Sirah Oyster with Champagne Froth, Foiegrasse Wrapped Bobby Veal Tenderloin, Caramel Chantrelle and Hatchet Custard Veal Sweetbread, finishing off with Schuffenberger Chocolate Pudding with Peanut Butter, Tropical Fruit and Vanilla Ice Cream—we could not help but talk about the Food Hotel Asia (FHA) 2006 Culinary Challenge, April 23-26, 2006, in Singapore.

During the course of the evening, our Ambassadors Ambassador Philippines Orlemar Frei and J. Gamboa proudly announced the members of the Philippine national team the country's finest chefs—Erick Balduran (EXECHEF, Hotel Manual (Lido Chef's Café), Virgilio Timola (Makati Shangri-La Hotel), Arnold Quevarra (Dusit Thani Manila), Jojo Cacanindin (Dusit Shangri-La Hotel), Jaime de Vera (Makati Shangri-La Hotel), with Humphrey Navarra (FHA) as team captain and Herbert Gandler (ESCAPE) as team manager.

We have great confidence in our elite squad and are certain that their participation will be prominently felt by the other national teams from all over the world. However, we need Philippine support for their transportation needs, travel, equipment and logistics. As we encourage you to boost the cause, we also encourage you to share the dream. Perhaps, through food, the Philippines will be great again! Here's to going for the gold in Singapore in 2006!

For sponsorship, contact Orlemar Frei (09455771) and J. Gamboa (8166735).

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aglibut

Must-have

Time and again, people have sent me text messages about the Joy Charcoal Stove I featured some months ago. This one I think is a must-have to all households now more than ever. Joy works wonders; the charcoal lasts four hours. It's smokeless and great for stewing and long hours of cooking. Contact Yael and Joy Mood's cels (+632)043, 0919-3775264/0917-857-8798/9920-817-3226).

Egg-sport help

Most of the time I cook for myself. And I like eggs. Can you give me tips on cooking perfect hard-boiled eggs? And also for good omelet?

Magle-gay

Here it is, Mr Magle-Gay, and you don't just get hard-boiled but everything else, including some tall tales as well! Enjoy!

The egg came before the chicken, it seems. The Egyptians believe the god Ptah created the egg from the sun and the moon. The Chinese believe that in the beginning, neither Heaven nor Earth existed. There was only egg-shaped chaos. From the egg-shaped chaos a giant was born called "Pan Ku." "Yin," the heavy dark yolk of the egg-shaped chaos, fell and became the Earth. "Yang," the light white part of the egg-shaped chaos, became the Sky.

The Phanekuans thought a primeval egg split open to form heaven and earth while Americans Indians thought the Great Spirit born from from a giant golden egg to create the world. But however the egg came to be is not as important as the fact that it contains a heavenly indulgence.

More on eggs:

• 1 large egg, the yolk contains 5 g total fat, 2 g saturated fatty acids, 213 mg cholesterol, and 59 calories. Egg white contains 17 calories. The American Heart Association recommends limiting cholesterol consumption to 300 mg a day.